

# Abundant Living

*A supplement to the Abundant Living Personal Finance Organizer*

BY MATT AND CYNTHIA SCHOENFELD

**S**ave money? Yeah, right! Most people say they can barely pay their bills. Where in the world am I supposed to find money to save? In fact, a recent study by two economists from Harvard and Dartmouth found that 75% of people know they are not saving enough, especially for retirement.

*continued on page 2*

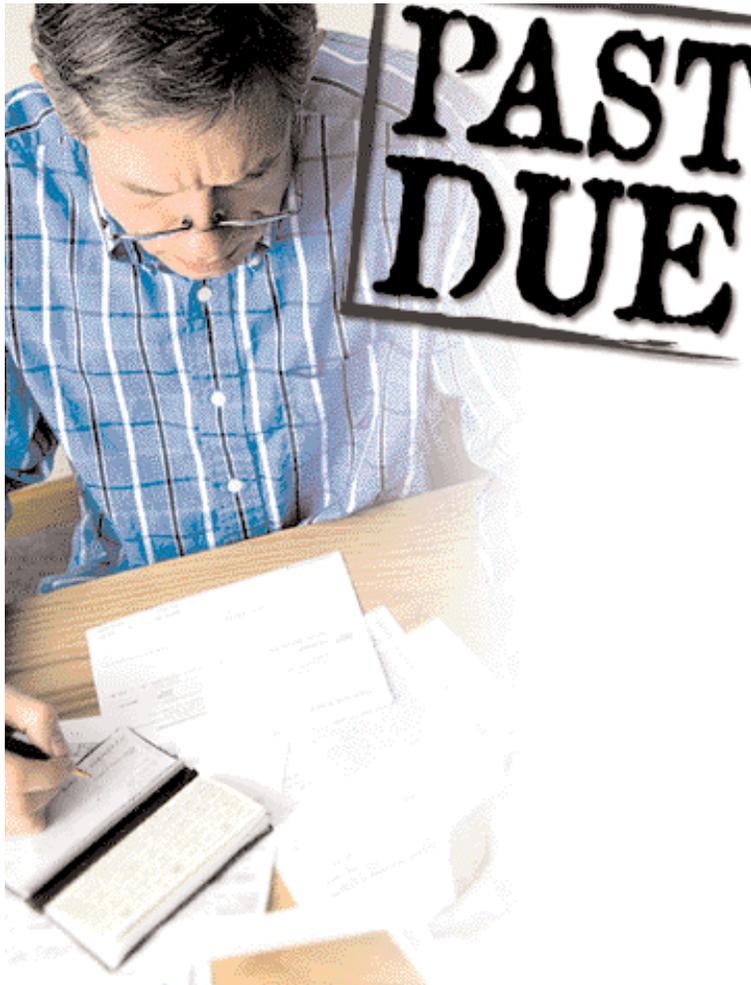
## Inside: TIPS ON HOW TO REALISTICALLY SAVE MONEY

*Use your money effectively and save up to \$10,000 in one year.*

- Entertainment
- Vacations
- Gifts
- Clothes
- Food
- Home
- Insurance & Medical
- Auto
- Savings, Investing & Taxes



For more information on Abundant Living, call 1-877-424-9878



### Here's the key:

You have to make getting a good deal a priority. Comedian Jerry Seinfeld's goofy neighbor, Kramer, said it best, "Retail is for suckers, Jerry!" He had a nose for a good deal. And you can too without working all that hard at it or resorting to dumpster diving. It just takes a change in mindset, some ingenuity, and the willingness to try. It does not mean that you have to sacrifice quality

products either. We've employed these strategies over the years, and we have saved thousands of dollars. This pamphlet will help you get started with some ideas.

And don't forget, always ask the vital question, "Is this your best price?"

You'll be astounded at how far a little good-natured haggling can get you. We've listed a variety of money-saving tips, organized into different categories. And this is just

scratching the surface. We hope these ideas will free up funds you can use to give, plan, and save more. They will get you started on making Proverbs 21:20 a way of life, "In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has."

### **Entertainment**

-- Get movies, books, CDs, DVDs, and magazines free at the library. (\$\$ to \$\$\$)

Take advantage of discounts: Senior, student, clergy. (\$ to \$\$\$)

-- Don't join the gym. Are you really going to go?

-- Walk or run in the great outdoors instead. (\$\$ to \$\$\$)

-- See if your employer offers discount ticket plans. (\$ to \$\$)

-- Take advantage of free movies, concerts, theater, and festivals around town. (\* to \$\$\$)

-- Swap babysitting with another couple in your neighborhood. Giving and receiving! (\$\$)

### **Vacations**

-- Take advantage of ministry discounts. Some resorts and hotels offer up to 100 percent discounts on lodging for pastors and

ministry professionals. (\$\$ to \$\$\$)

-- Buy the "Entertainment" book for the city you'll be visiting for discounts on food and attractions. (\$\$ to \$\$\$)

-- Obtain lodging with a kitchen and eat a percentage of your meals in. You will save anywhere from 70 to 75 percent on food costs per meal. That buys a lot of tickets to the theme parks. (\$\$ to \$\$\$)

### **Gifts**

-- Have a talented friend help you design your own baby announcements or decorate your house. (\$ to \$\$)

-- Buy good quality at lower prices (discount retailers). Ask Kramer. This works. (\$ to \$\$)

-- Make homemade cards, baked goods, or gifts (picture frames, toys, dress-up clothes for kids). Save all that art work from school and turn them into cards. Watch Grandma's heart melt. Check your library for books to get you inspired. (\$)

### **Clothes**

-- Buy during off-season sales. Save 50 to 75 percent on high-quality clothes. Why pay \$60 for

# TIPS ON HOW TO REALISTICALLY SAVE MONEY

the shirt when you can get it for \$15? I recently got a \$50 shirt for \$1.34! (\$\$ to \$\$\$)

-- Check this one out: shop garage sales for high quality, kids' clothes and collectibles. Then resell them online. We have a friend who has done quite well doing this (Thanks Danielle for this idea!). (\$ to \$\$)

-- Shop consignment stores for kids. This is amazing! Items are often brand-new for a tenth of the cost. (\$\$ to \$\$\$)

-- Shop consignment stores for maternity clothes. This will pay for the new nursery! (\$ to \$\$)

-- Consign the clothes back

if in good shape. Double bonus! (\* to \$\$)

## **Food**

-- Return unsatisfactory products to receive replacement. Fruit may be a gamble, but if other products are no good, why pay for it!?! Ok, we admit it; we've taken fruit back, too! (\$\$\$)

-- Go out to eat less. Stimulate your own economy. (\$\$\$)

-- Shop store brands. It's the same product, people! (\$\$ to \$\$\$)

-- Buy a cow. Well, part of one anyway. If you live in the right area, purchasing a ¼ or ½ cow can save big on meat costs. (\$\$)

-- Brown bag it. I know, boring, but powerful. (\$\$ to \$\$\$)

-- Buy a lunch box. Save a tree. (\* to \$)

-- Take your own food on a picnic. It's romantic! (\$\$)

-- Call the toll-free number on food products if unsatisfactory—they will send coupons for free replacements. (\$\$)

-- Cook more from scratch. It's fun! (\$\$)

-- Go back a second time on sale items with limits, or send your husband through the next check-out lane. (\$\$)

-- Do the math on bulk foods. They are not always cheaper. (\$\$)

-- Make your own smooth-

ies or popsicles. Kids love this! (\$)

-- Call the toll free number on products you use for coupons/discounts. They'll send them! (\$)

## **Home**

-- Play stores against each other for big purchases (appliance, cars, furniture). Playing the meet-it-or-beat-it price game works. We've saved thousands on middle-to-high-end products. (\$\$ to \$\$\$).

-- Check the clearance section first. Can you say Thermador cook-top for less than ½ price? (\$\$ to \$\$\$).

-- Keep house cooler in winter and warmer in summer. Get some wool socks and a sweater. Every degree on the thermostat equates to about a savings of three percent. Ceiling fans in the summer will cool you down. We're talking real money here. (\$\$ to \$\$\$)

-- Mow your own lawn. Save money while exercising! See, who needs the gym? (\$\$ to \$\$\$)

-- Turn in those work reimbursements for mileage or cell phones. Pick a calling plan that matches the amount of reimbursement. Free long distance on the weekends baby!

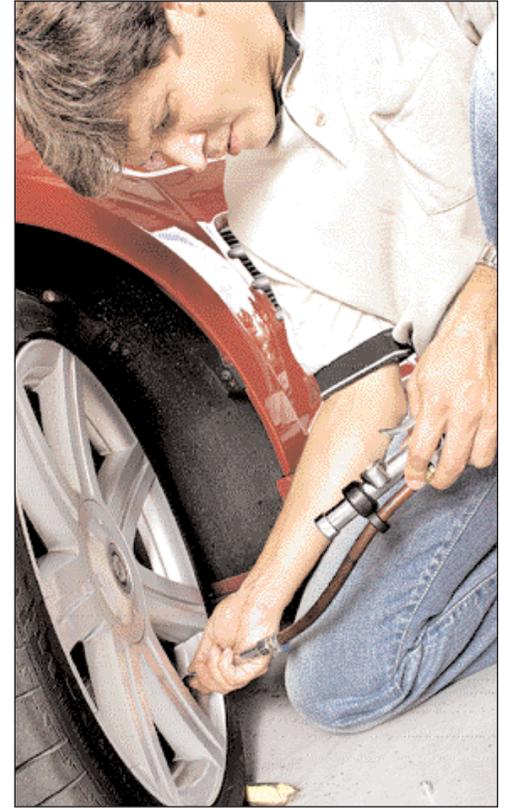
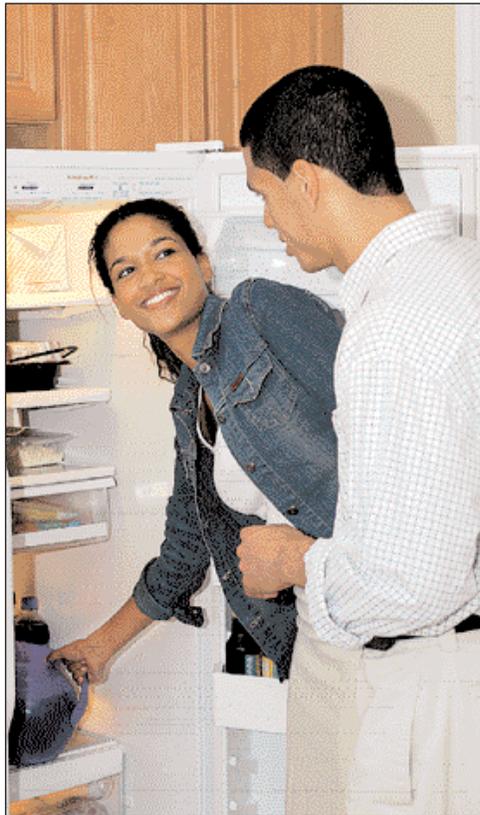
-- Create your own art. Take



- a picture or paint a painting and have it framed. Black and white works best. Better yet, frame it yourself! Great conversation pieces. (\$ to \$\$\$)
- Trade perennials with your neighbors and friends. Multiply, divide, give, receive. (\$ to \$\$)
- Get the annual rabies shots for Fido or Snowball at the Humane Society. (\* to \$\$)
- Buy lower-wattage/long-lasting light bulbs. Then turn off the lights. (\* to \$)
- Put outdoor lights on timers. (\* to \$)
- Buy one of those do-it-yourself books, and then, well...do it yourself. (\* to \$\$\$)
- Try reusable plastic containers instead of zip lock bags. We were going to say reuse zip lock bags, but let's not go there. We'll save that for the hardcore savings pamphlet! (\*)

## **Insurance/Medical**

- Raise deductibles on your policies (auto, home, medical). Make sure you have sufficient funds in savings to cover if needed. (\$\$ to \$\$\$)
- Set up a high deductible health policy with a Health Savings Account (HSA). Pay for what you use. Health concerns are an issue, and you must fund the HSA. Do your homework and know your health care usage before trying this. (\$\$\$ to \$\$\$)
- Take advantage of free health screenings (BP, mammograms, cholesterol, ect.) at work or in the community. (\$ to \$\$\$)
- -Check health clinics for immunizations. Usually much less. (\* to \$)



## **Auto**

- Buy a less expensive car (\$\$\$\$)
- Buy a good used car (\$\$\$\$). Utilize *Consumer Reports* magazine.
- Buy a car that is less expensive to maintain. (\$\$ to \$\$\$)
- Cluster errands and trips to save on gas. At \$2 to \$3 a gallon, this is becoming more critical! (\$\$)
- Wash and detail it yourself. (\$\$)
- Buy multiple oil change plans. Some don't even make you pay upfront. (\*)

## **Saving/Investing/Taxes**

- Reap the savings of having a home-based business or home office. A portion of all maintenance, utilities, repairs, and additions is tax deductible. (\$\$)

- An oldie, but a goodie...raise your withholding exemptions if you received a tax refund over \$500. Put the money in your pocket instead of loaning it to the government (\$\$ to \$\$\$)
- Pick mutual funds with low management fees. Over the course of 10 years, you could add five to seven percent to your return. Remember the power of compounding? Those extra percentage points could really make a big difference over time. (\$\$ to \$\$\$)
- Use no-load mutual funds for your investments. Same idea as above. Lower fees and no commissions can lead to big savings over time. (\$\$ to \$\$\$)
- Bundle investments with one-fund family to meet minimum balances so custodial fees are waived (\* to \$).