



Swain County Crossroads

Family and Consumer Sciences Newsletter

Reasons to Get Moving in the Mountains!

Being physically active helps to enhance the quality of life for people of all ages and abilities. Physical activity can substantially reduce the risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, and colon cancer just by becoming moderately physically active on most days of the week. Being active helps build a healthier body by strengthening bones, muscles, and joints, it aids in reducing depression and anxiety and enhances the immune system. Physical activity can reduce falls among the elderly by improving balance and strength as well as help relieve the pain of arthritis.

Children can benefit from physical activity. Physical inactivity is one of the causes of the childhood overweight epidemic in North Carolina. A strong predictor of activity level as an adult is being active throughout childhood. Children are forming health-related habits that will remain through their life. It is essential to encourage youth to establish good physical activity habits.

At the Cooperative Extension, we want to provide inexpensive opportunities for you to be more active. We are offering several opportunities for you to “get moving in the mountains!”



Line Dancing

Thursdays
6:30 p.m.
Swain County Cooperative Extension
(SCC Swain Center)

Beginner Clogging Classes

Tuesdays
5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Swain County Cooperative
Extension
(SCC Swain Center)



There is no cost to participate in either of these programs and no prior dance experience is required. We want to thank our volunteers, Kerry McClellan of the Tangled Feet Stompers and Chris Smith, for making these classes possible.

For more great ways to "Get Moving in the Mountains", turn to page 2!



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Get Moving in the Mountains . . . *continued*

Country Two-Step Dance Workshop

Learn the basics of Country Two-Step with instructor Michael Thomas. There is no cost to participate in this program and no prior dance experience is required. Friday, November 16, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Swain County Cooperative Extension Office (SCC Swain Center).

Arthritis Foundation Education Program

A community-based, recreational and group exercise program designed specifically for people with arthritis and related diseases. Meetings are most Monday and Thursdays (*through November*) at 10:00 a.m. at the Swain County Senior Center.

If you are interested in participating in any of these activities, or need more information, please call 488-3848.

Are Gift Cards the Perfect Gift for Kids?



There are many reasons to use gift cards as holiday presents. They are easy to purchase, come in all price ranges and they save time. They're a perfect gift for the individual who has everything.

But is it a good idea for gift giving to children? What are we teaching kids about credit use when we place that plastic into their impressionable hands?

A gift card is often an ideal gift for an adult with a complete understanding of how they work. However, there can be downsides for child recipients who lack sufficient understanding to distinguish between a general gift card and a credit card.

When giving gift cards to children, we are giving them something that seems like and often looks almost exactly like a credit card. They use the card but there are no payments associated with the purchase.

Children just forming their view of the credit and consumer world need all the mentoring and practice they can get in sound credit management practices. Just as it is important to dispel the notion that money comes from ATM machines, it is important to

Laughter is the Best Medicine!

What is

Laughter Yoga? Dr. Madan

Katara founded laughter Yoga in 1995 as a way to bring people together to laugh!

Medical research continues to support the many healthy benefits gained from laughing – it boosts our immune systems, lowers our blood pressure and brings more oxygen to the brain.

Anyone can laugh for NO reason without using humor, jokes or comedy. The concept of Laughter Yoga is based on the fact that the body cannot differentiate between fake and real laughter. Since laughter is contagious, the simulated laughter soon becomes real laughter! Laughter is used as a physical activity in a group, encouraging eye contact, deep breathing and playfulness.

teach kids about responsible choices when it comes to gift cards and credit cards.

Are gift cards for children to be completely avoided? Maybe not, if you use them as a teachable moment. Everyone has to decide for themselves. Perhaps the easiest lesson to teach children is to buy things that you want by handing over good old-fashioned money or consider these alternative gift ideas:

- Education fund deposits or deposits to a child's bank account
- Memberships to a local zoo, children's museum, amusement park, etc.
- A special outing to the local ice cream shop or a trip to the zoo
- Paying for lessons (music, sports, arts, craft)
- Movie passes or tickets to a sporting event or concert
- Subscription to a favorite magazine or craft kit club



Get the Scoop on Winter Squash

It's time to harvest the winter squash so why not enjoy these colorful, uniquely shaped and flavored vegetables.

While we may be more familiar with summer squash varieties, winter squash is more nutritious and provide an excellent source of vitamin A, vitamin C, potassium, dietary fiber and folate. Consider these tips on how to select, store and enjoy delicious and nutritious winter squash.

Butternut Squash is probably the most common winter squash. The shell can range from yellow to camel and the flesh is orange in color. Butternut squash looks like a pear-shaped bat. This delicious squash is often used in soups, roasted or cut in strips, seasoned and baked or grilled.

Acorn Squash looks just as its name suggests. Acorn squash is a somewhat oval-shaped squash with a ribbed, dark green skin and orange flesh. The most common method of preparation is to halve them, remove the seeds and bake. Acorn squash may then be eaten directly from the shell.

Pumpkins are the most easily recognized winter squash. They serve double duty as a great source for pies, desserts and baked dishes, and with the shell dressed as a jack-o-lantern it welcomes trick-or-treaters at our front door.



Winter squash ripens on the vines to develop a hard outer shell. Avoid winter squash that have soft spots on the rind. Winter squash should be heavy, firm for their size and dull, not glossy. Winter squash may be stored for up to six months, depending on the variety. Ideal storage conditions are a dark, dry location where temperatures are maintained between 50 and 60 degrees (not the refrigerator).

Cover cut winter squash with plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator for up to two days.

When preparing winter squash, wash the exterior thoroughly. Winter squash must be cooked to soften the flesh. Before cooking a whole squash, pierce the skin near the stem to allow the steam to escape. Bake at 350 degrees F for 45 minutes to one hour, until a knife can be easily inserted near the stem. Remove the seeds from the cavity after baking and carve out the flesh for further preparation or stuff the squash as called for the in recipe.

Moroccan Tagine

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - cut into chunks
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 small butternut squash, peeled and chopped
- 1 (15.5 ounce) can garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 carrot, peeled and chopped
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes with juice
- 1 (14 ounce) can vegetable broth
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 dash cayenne pepper

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat, and cook the chicken, onion, and garlic about 15 minutes, until browned.

Mix the squash, garbanzo beans, carrot, tomatoes, broth, sugar, and lemon juice into the skillet. Season with salt, coriander, and cayenne pepper. Bring the mixture to a boil, and continue cooking 30 minutes, until vegetables are tender.



What's in Season in NC?

Choose to buy locally grown fruits and vegetables. Here is what's in season October through December in North Carolina:

- Apples
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Leafy Greens
- Peanuts
- Pecans
- Sweet Potatoes
- Pumpkins

For more on local foods, go to:

ncfarmfresh.com | theproductelady.org

Swain County Center
P.O. Box 2329
Bryson City, North Carolina 28713

4-H & the Bailey Mountain Cloggers

In October, members of Swain County's 4-H Clogging Clovers traveled to Mars Hill College to visit with the Bailey Mountain Cloggers. The Bailey Mountain Cloggers are comprised of 25 students from over nine different states. BMC is a traveling performance and competition team and have won nineteen (19) National Championships.

Youth were excited to be in the dance studio and were impressed by hundreds of trophies displayed along the wall. Once youth had shoes on, the BMC began teaching them intermediate steps including; a Scotty, a Cow Tail and a Walk the Dog. The BMC also taught them a few fun partner dances. Youth had a wonderful time and we are planning to visit with them again soon.



Crossroads is a quarterly newsletter designed to inform and educate Swain County residents on issues that affect them, and to provide ideas for helping improve their quality of life.

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