

Switched On Seniors



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Switched on Seniors

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switchedonseniors.com

It's always on Thursday.
It's always senior driven.
It's always FREE.
All seniors are always welcome



Greetings Seniors-things finally seem to be moving in a positive direction, assuming the latest variant doesn't take hold and reverse the gains we have made so far with the COVID pandemic. Hopefully by the time you're reading this, restaurants, gyms, churches etc. will be back to 'full' capacity for those wishing to venture out into the new world. It's a new world for sure, as masks will still be the order of the day and vaccination proof requirements will be a necessity.

How does this work for Switched on Seniors here in Markham. Our plan is fairly simple, we will keep our Zoom meetings going until we close for our Christmas/New Year break. Our last session this year will be **Thursday December 9th, 2021.**

When we re-start the program in January we plan to be 100% in-person! Our meeting location will be St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church on Main Street North in Markham. The premises are fully accessible & there's plenty of adjacent parking. Our thanks to St. Andrew's for providing this space at no cost to our program.

Having made that statement I recall having made a similar one for an in-person start in October and that did not materialise due to Public Health guidelines. We approach 2022 with much more optimism-however we always have a Plan B -just in case. Watch the web site www.switchedonseniors.com for full information about the start date for 2022 and the program highlights

Stay safe, well, & warm-winter is just around the corner.

Holiday Recipes

Last month we asked you for some of your favourite holiday recipes, and you didn't disappoint! Thank you to everyone who contributed this month.

Joan's Chicken & Pasta Bake



Ingredients:

- 4 chicken breasts (about 2 lbs – (boneless/skinless))
- 1 tsp. each garlic and onion powder
- 1 tsp. each salt and black pepper
- 12 oz. dry pasta – elbow or rotini
- 1/3 c olive oil (or vegetable oil) + extra
- 1 medium onion – finely chopped
- 1 medium carrot – finely chopped
- 4 strips bacon – finely chopped
- 2 medium zucchini – chopped
- 4 c prepared pasta sauce (canned or bottled)
- 1 tsp crushed dry basil
- 1 tsp crushed dry oregano
- 1/2 grated Parmesan or Romano cheese
- 2 c grated cheddar cheese
- 1/2 c sour cream
- Ground black pepper & salt
- 1 c pasta water

Directions:

1. Pre-heat oven to 375°F. Lightly brush a large oven proof dish (about 2 inches deep) with oil. Set aside.
2. Trim excess fat and sinew from chicken. Slice chicken breasts into long strips then cut into one-inch pieces. Place in a large bowl. Sprinkle with garlic/onion powder, salt & pepper. Mix well. Set aside.
3. Cook pasta in a large pot of rapidly boiling lightly salted water. Drain pasta but save some of the water. Place drained pasta in a large bowl, drizzle with a little oil, toss and set aside.
4. Heat oil in a large, heavy pot. Cook chicken quickly (in batches) over high heat until lightly browned but not cooked through. Remove chicken with slotted spoon. Place in bowl and set aside.
5. Reduce heat to medium and add more oil, if needed. Add chopped onion, carrot and bacon. Cook on medium heat for about 7 minutes, stirring frequently. Add chopped zucchini, mix well and cook another 5 minutes.
6. Add pasta sauce, basil and oregano. Stir. Bring to a gentle boil. Reduce heat and simmer on medium low heat about 10 minutes. Remove from heat. If sauce is too thick, add a little pasta water. Add grated parmesan cheese, 1/2 cup of the grated cheddar and the sour cream. Stir to combine. Taste and season with salt and pepper, if needed.
7. Add the cooked pasta, browned chicken. Mix well.
8. Spread mixture into prepared oven proof dish. Top with remaining grated cheddar. Bake on middle shelf of pre-heated oven for 30 to 40 minutes or until golden and cooked through. Remove from oven and allow to rest about 10 minutes before serving.

Holiday Recipes

Joan's Herbed Cornbread

A moist, tasty version of a favourite quick bread



Ingredients:

- 1-1/2 c fine cornmeal
- 1 c whole milk
- 1 c sour cream
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 c all purpose flour
- 2 tsps. baking powder
- ½ tsp. grated nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- ½ c butter - softened
- ¼ c granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup finely chopped chives or green onions
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves (or ¼ tsp dry)

Directions:

1. Generously butter a 9 x 5-inch loaf pan and pre-heat oven to 350°F
2. In a small bowl, combine cornmeal and milk. Set aside.
3. In a measuring cup, stir together sour cream and baking soda. Set aside.
4. In medium bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, nutmeg, salt and black pepper. Set aside.
5. In a large bowl, using electric hand mixer, beat together butter and sugar until fluffy. Add eggs and beat until smooth.
6. Using wooden spoon, stir in the cornmeal/milk mixture. Add flour mixture and continue mixing till combined. Add sour cream, chives and thyme. Mix to combine but do not over work.
7. Pour into buttered 9 x 5-inch loaf pan.
8. Place on middle shelf of pre-heated 350°F oven. Bake about 45 minutes or until cake tester inserted in centre comes out clean.
9. Remove from oven. Allow to cool about 15 minutes. Remove from loaf pan, slice and serve.

Best Ever Cheese Biscuits

Ingredients:

- 1/2 c Flour
- 1/4 c Crisco
- 1/3 c mature cheddar grated
- 1 tsp mustard powder
- 1 egg yolk
- 2-4 Tbsp water

1. Pre-heat oven to 375°F
2. Rub flour, Crisco, and mustard powder together till they resemble breadcrumbs
3. Stir in grated cheese.
4. Add egg yolk, and mix well, then add a little bit of water at a time till mixture forms a dough
5. Roll out dough to roughly 1/4" thickness, and cut using round cookie cutters.
6. Place on a lined baking sheet and bake for 9-10 minutes until set, and golden brown. Cool on wire rack.

Holiday Recipes

Barb's Diabetic Plum Crumble

A great dessert for those watching their sugar intake, it also works well with frozen fruits

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 lb. Plums halved and pitted
- 1 Tbsp Splenda
- 1 Tbsp Cornstarch
- 1/2 tsp Ground Ginger
- 1/2 tsp Cinnamon

Topping

- 3/4 c large flake oats
- 1/2 c Whole wheat flour
- 1/2 c Splenda
- 1/4 c chopped Almonds
- 1/4 c Margarine
- 1 tsp grated orange zest
- 1/2 tsp Cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground Cardamon

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F
2. In a bowl toss plums with Splenda, cornstarch, ginger and cinnamon. Arrange evenly in deep 9" pie plate.
3. Make the topping: In a bowl, combine oats, flour, Splenda, almonds, margarine, orange zest, cinnamon and cardamon. Using your fingers, rub ingredients together until crumbly dough forms.
4. Sprinkle evenly over fruit mixture.
5. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until topping is golden brown and fruit mixture is bubbling.

Makes 6 servings.

Jen's Crunchy Chocolate Turrón

A favourite with both young and old!

Ingredients:

- 8 oz/227 g semi sweet baking chocolate
- 8 oz/227 g dark chocolate (60% cocoa)
- 4 1/2 c (2 3/4 oz) puffed rice cereal
- 1/3 c (2 1/2 oz) vegetable shortening or margarine
- 3/4 c (3 oz) almonds slivered or coarsely chopped or coarsely chopped hazelnuts

1. Break up both kinds of chocolate into pieces.
 2. Place in a medium sized glass mixing bowl and heat in the microwave for 1 1/2 minutes
 3. Check the chocolate and stir. If not melted return to microwave and cook for another 30 seconds.
 4. Repeat 30 second procedure until chocolate is completely melted.
 5. Add the vegetable shortening to melted chocolate, stir until well blended.
 6. Stir in puffed rice and nuts.
 7. Spread chocolate mixture into a mold approx. 5 x 7 inches. Silicone molds work best if no silicone mold is available, use a plastic container.
 8. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and place turrón in the refrigerator for at least 6 hours
 9. Remove and run a paring knife around the outside of the mold.
 10. Twist container to loosen turrón, then turn onto a plate.
- Cut into slices about 1/4 inch thick.



Holiday Recipes

Jean's Pumpkin Cake with Cream Cheese Frosting

A beautiful crowd pleaser, this cake is great for holiday get togethers

Ingredients:

- 4 Large eggs
- 2 c all -purpose flour, sifted before measuring
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground cloves
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 c sugar
- 1 c vegetable oil
- 1 can (1lb) pure pumpkin puree (not pumpkin pie filling)

Frosting

- 2 3 oz packs Cream cheese softened
- 1 Tbsp rum or 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 c icing sugar
- Pecan or Walnut halves for garnish

Directions:

1. Crack eggs into the large bowl of an electric mixer, cover and let stand 30 minutes until room temperature. Preheat oven 350F.
2. Sift flour with baking soda, salt, cloves, cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg.
3. With electric mixer at high speed, beat eggs thoroughly. Add sugar and continue to beat until eggs are lemony in colour and the mixture is light and fluffy. Gradually add oil and pumpkin, beating well after each addition to blend thoroughly.
4. With electric mixer at low speed, beat in flour mixture, several spoonfuls at a time, beating only until flour is moistened. Pour into ungreased 10 inch tube pan without removable bottom.
5. Bake about 1 hour, or until surface springs back when gently pressed with fingertips. Remove cake from oven and cool completely in pan on wire rack.
6. Meanwhile, prepare cream-cheese frosting. In a small bowl, with electric mixer at medium speed, beat cream cheese with rum until smooth and soft. Gradually add icing sugar, beating until light and fluffy.
7. Using a long narrow metal spatula, carefully loosen cake from pan; remove. Place on cake plate and frost top and sides with cream-cheese frosting. Use the tip of the spatula to swirl the frosting in a spoke-like fashion in toward the centre of the cake.
8. Arrange pecan or walnut halves decoratively around top edge of cake. Serve cake immediately or store tightly covered in the refrigerator. Remove about 30 minutes before serving.

Makes 12 Servings

Holiday Recipes

Aunt Lucy's Oat Cakes

A tasty, and easy, family favourite!

Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ Cups Sugar
- 2 Cups Rolled Oats
- 2 Cups Flour
- 1 Tsp. Baking Powder
- 1 Tsp. Salt
- 1½ Cups Shortening
- ½ Tsp. Baking Soda
- ½ Cup Boiling Water
- 2 Cups Bran Flakes

Directions:

1. Preheat oven 475 F.
2. Add baking soda to boiling water and let stand until cool.
3. Mix together flour, baking powder, salt, bran flakes, rolled oats, and sugar.
4. Cut in shortening, add water and soda mixture, and combine till a dough forms
5. Turn mixture out onto floured surface, and roll out thin. Cut into 3" rounds
6. Bake until golden brown - about 7-10 minutes

Steve's Snowballs

An East Coast, No-Bake Favourite

Ingredients:

- 3 c sugar
- ¾ c melted butter
- 1 ¼ c milk
- 3 c large flake rolled oats
- 1 c unsweetened fine coconut
- 12 Tbsp cocoa
- Approx 1 ½ c extra coconut to roll the balls in

Directions:

1. In a large saucepan, combine the sugar, butter & milk. This mixture will foam up while boiling so use a larger pot than you think you'll need.
2. Boil together gently over medium heat until mixture reaches about 225 -230 degrees F on a candy thermometer, or for 5-6 minutes but don't start timing until the mixture is fully at a rolling boil. Make sure you don't stir the mixture while it boils.
3. In a large bowl, mix together the oats, 1 cup coconut and cocoa.
4. Add the boiled mixture to the dry ingredients until well combined and chill well in the fridge about 1-2 hours, then shape into 1 ½ inch balls. It will be firm, but warm up in your hands as you form the balls.
5. Roll the balls in additional coconut. These should ALWAYS be stored in the fridge to maintain the soft yet slightly chewy texture. They tend to be too soft at room temperature. They can also be stored in the freezer, and eaten frozen!

Coping & Caring



The first snow of the season has fallen – and melted away. The days are still getting shorter – and darker. We have coped with Covid-19 for more than 20 months – and now we have a new variant to deal with. We have plenty to cope with! We had news bulletins focusing on wild fires a few months back – and now both sides of the country are dealing with flood and infrastructure damage. Indeed, we have plenty to cope with!

The intent of these “Coping and Caring” lines is to offer encouragement when there is so much in current experience that can be described as “discouraging” There is a real need to foster caring attitudes and relationships in our community because we can so easily feel overwhelmed by contemporary circumstances.

This is also the season of goodwill. We hear the sound of the Salvation Army Collection Kettles; the daily tally of toys on Toy Mountain; the sound of music round Community Christmas Trees. We see boxes of “food for others” in major food stores, Fire Halls and Churches. We are reminded of the extent and reach of our Social and Health service. There are lots of expressions of care going on around us!

All this before we engage in our own little acts of Caring – and feel the glow of warmth within us and feel a smile breaking out on our face. Yes, we can express care – and it is wonderful.



Puzzle Page

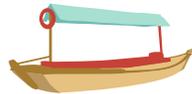
Trivia ???

- #1 Which British Girl Group had a member by the name of Mel B?
- #2 How many hearts does an octopus have?
- #3 How many eyes does a bee have?
- #4 What was the name of the rock band formed by Jimmy Page?

Brain Teaser

There is a word in the English language in which the first 2 letters signify a male, The first 3 letters signify a female, the first 4 signify a great man and the whole word, a great woman. What is the word?

Logic Puzzle



Four people (Alex, Brook, Chris and Dusty) want to cross a river in a boat that can only carry 100kg. Alex weighs 90kg, Brook weighs 80kg, Chris weighs 60kg, Dusty weighs 40kg and they have 20kg of supplies. How do they get across?

Answers

Trivia
1) Spice Girls, 2) Three 3) Five 4) Led Zeppelin
Answer To Brian Teaser:
Heroine
Answer for Logic Question:
Chris and Dusty row across (combined weight 100kg), Dusty returns, Alex rows over and Chris returns, Chris and Dusty row across again, Dusty returns, Brook rows across with the supplies (combined 100kg), and Chris returns. Chris and Dusty row across again.



Upcoming Events

We will be taking a Holiday Break this year and our last Zoom gathering for this year will be Thursday December 9th with a cooking presentation from Renata Richardson!

Our very first meeting of 2022 will be on Thursday January 20th at 11 a.m. as usual. However, what is not 'as usual' is that we will be meeting IN PERSON at 143 Main Street North, Markham-which is St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.

Please check our web site www.switchedonseniors.com from time to time for updates on the programme for 2022 and make sure that you subscribe to our emails to stay informed and in the loop. You can subscribe by following this link <https://www.switchedonseniors.com/sign-up-for-our-emails.html>