

Memorial Day... A day to pause and remember the sacrifice given for us to have the freedoms we enjoy daily.

And the unofficial start to summer!

This year, when enjoying time with family, take a moment and reflect on how lucky we are to live in a county where we have the freedom to agree or disagree. And to remember all those that died to provide that freedom.

God Bless the Heroes and

God Bless the USA

Watermelon Salsa

Prep: 20 min.

Servings: 3 cups

2 C. seeded finely chopped watermelon
1/2 C. finely chopped peeled cucumber
1/4 C. finely chopped red onion
1/4 C. finely chopped sweet red pepper
1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced
1/4 C. minced fresh cilantro
1 T. minced fresh basil
1 T. minced fresh mint
2 T. honey
1 tsp. lime juice
Baked tortilla chip scoops

In a large bowl, combine the watermelon, cucumber, onion, peppers and herbs. Drizzle with honey and lime juice; gently toss to coat. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Serve with chips.

Creamy Cranberry Dip

Prep: 15 min.

Servings: 4 cups

1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
1 C. sour cream
2 T. honey
2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 can (14 oz.) whole-berry cranberry sauce
1 C. sliced almonds, toasted
Assorted crackers

In a small bowl, beat the cream cheese, sour cream, honey and cinnamon until smooth. Spread into a shallow bowl or 9-in. pie plate. Top with cranberry sauce. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Just before serving, sprinkle with almonds. Serve with crackers.

Baked BLT Dip

Active Time: 20 min.

Total Time: 1 hr.

Servings: 8

1 lb. bacon
2 pts. cherry tomatoes
1 (8-oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
6 oz. cheddar cheese, shredded
1 C. sour cream
1 C. mayonnaise
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped and mashed to a paste
1 romaine lettuce heart, shredded
1 T. fresh lemon juice
Crostini or toast points

Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil, and fit with a wire rack. Arrange bacon slices in an even layer on rack, and bake in preheated oven until crisp, 30 to 35 min. Cool bacon, reserving 1 tablespoon bacon grease; chop bacon, and set aside.

Toss tomatoes with reserved bacon grease. Spread on rimmed baking sheet, and bake at 400°F oven until tomatoes burst, about 10 min. Let cool slightly. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F

Combine cream cheese, cheddar, sour cream, mayonnaise, garlic, 1 cup of the chopped bacon, and 1 cup of the tomatoes in a large bowl; transfer to a 2-quart baking dish. Bake at 350°F until hot and bubbly, 15 to 20 min. Top with lettuce, remaining tomatoes, and remaining chopped bacon; drizzle with lemon juice. Serve with crostini or toast points

Sloppy Joe Casserole

Prep Time: 25 min.

Cook Time: 20 min.

Total Time: 45 min.

Servings: 6

8 oz. elbow macaroni
1 T. olive oil
1-1/2 lbs. ground chuck
1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped (about 1 C.)
1 med. onion, chopped (about 1 C.)
3/4 C. chopped carrots
1 tsp. finely chopped garlic
2 tsp. kosher salt
1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
1 (15-oz.) can tomato sauce
1 T. Worcestershire sauce
1/2 tsp. dry mustard
1 T. light brown sugar
2 C. shredded Muenster cheese
2 hamburger buns, finely chopped
Garnish: fresh parsley leaves

Preheat oven to 375°F. Cook macaroni 3 min. less than package directions. Drain. Set aside.

Heat oil in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add beef and cook, breaking into pieces, until browned, about 6 min. Drain grease, return meat to pan. Stir in bell pepper, onion, carrots, garlic, salt, and pepper and cook, stirring often, until peppers are tender, about 5 min.

Stir in tomato sauce, Worcestershire sauce, brown sugar, dry mustard, and 1-1/2 cups water; stir to combine, bring to a simmer, reduce heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 5 min.

Add pasta to meat mixture, and stir to combine. Pour into a lightly greased 7- x 11-inch casserole dish. Top evenly with cheese. Sprinkle with bread pieces and bake at 375°F 20 minutes or until cheese is bubbly and lightly golden brown. Garnish with fresh parsley leaves.

Homemade Potato Salad

Prep: 30 min.

Servings: 12

3-3-1/2 lb. potatoes (about 10 med)
6 hard-boiled large eggs
1 med. onion, finely chopped
1/2 C. mayonnaise
1/2 C. evaporated milk
3 T. white vinegar
2 T. prepared mustard
1/4 C. sugar
1 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
Additional hard-boiled large eggs, sliced
Paprika

In a large kettle, cook potatoes in boiling salted water until tender. Drain and cool. Peel potatoes; cut into chunks.

Separate egg yolks from whites. Set yolks aside. Chop whites and add to potatoes with onion.

In a small bowl, mash yolks. Stir in mayonnaise, milk, vinegar, mustard, sugar, salt and pepper. Pour over potatoes; toss well. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Spoon into a serving bowl.

Garnish with egg slices and paprika. Refrigerate until serving.

Grilled Teriyaki Chicken

Prep: 15 min.

Cook: 15 min.

Servings: 2

1/3 C. water
1/4 C. sherry or chicken broth
1/4 C. soy sauce
2 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 tsp. ground ginger
2 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (6 oz. each)

In a small saucepan, combine the first 5 ingredients. Bring to a boil over medium heat; cook for 1 min. Cool for 10 min. Pour into a shallow dish; add chicken and turn to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours.

Drain and discard marinade. Grill chicken, covered, over medium heat until a thermometer reads 165°F., 7-8 min. on each side.

Grilled Sheet Pan S'mores

Total: 35 min.

Active: 10 min.

Servings: 15 sandwiches

30 whole graham crackers
One 13-oz. jar chocolate spread
16 oz. marshmallow cream
8 oz. mini marshmallows
One 10-oz. bag caramel chips

12 oz. bittersweet chocolate chips
8 oz. toffee bits

Preheat a gas or charcoal grill to medium heat and line a sheet pan with aluminum foil.

Spread 15 graham crackers with chocolate spread and line them up on the prepared sheet pan. These will be the sandwich bases.

Using 2 spoons, dollop the marshmallow cream evenly on the chocolate-spread graham crackers. Sprinkle the mini marshmallows evenly across the graham crackers. Do the same with the caramel chips, chocolate chips and toffee bits. Top each bottom cracker with a top cracker to create a sandwich.

Place the sheet pan on the grill. If your grill has a lid, close it. If your grill does not have a lid, flip a second sheet pan over and rest on top of the pan of s'mores to create a lid. Cook until everything is deliciously melted, about 25 min. Serve warm.

Strawberry Cheesecake Cupcakes

Prep: 30 min.

Cook: 20 min.

Servings: 24

1-1/2 C. graham cracker crumbs
2 T. sugar
1/3 C. unsalted butter, softened

Batter:

4 lg. egg whites
3/4 C. unsalted butter, softened
1 C. plus 2 T. sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1-1/2 C. all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 C. sour cream
2 C. coarsely chopped fresh strawberries

Frosting:

2 pkgs. (8 oz. each) cream cheese, softened
1 C. unsalted butter, softened
3-3/4 C. confectioners' sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
Fresh strawberries and graham crackers crumbs

Line 24 muffin tins with paper liners; set aside.

Place the cracker crumbs, sugar and butter in a food processor; cover and process until fine crumbs form. Press tablespoonfuls onto bottoms of liners. Bake at 350°F for 3-5 min. or until lightly browned. Set aside to cool.

Place egg whites in a large bowl; let stand at room temperature for 30 min. In a large bowl, cream the butter, sugar and vanilla until light and fluffy, 5-7 min. In another bowl, combine the flour, baking powder and salt; add to the creamed mixture alternately with sour cream, beating well after each addition.

Beat egg whites with clean beaters until stiff peaks form. Fold a third of the egg whites into batter. Fold in remaining egg whites and strawberries.

Fill muffin cups three-fourths full. Bake at 350°F for 18-22 min. or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 min. before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and butter until fluffy. Add confectioners' sugar and vanilla; beat until smooth. Frost tops.

Garnish with strawberries and cracker crumbs. Store in the refrigerator.

Patriotic Ice Cream Cupcakes

Prep: 30 min.

Cook: 15 min.

Servings: 36

1 pkg. red velvet cake mix
1-1/2 qts. blue moon ice cream, softened if necessary
1 jar (7 oz.) marshmallow creme
3 C. heavy whipping cream
Red, white and blue sprinkles

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 36 muffin cups with paper liners.

Prepare cake batter according to package directions. Fill prepared cups about one-third full. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 11-14 min. Cool 10 min. before removing from pans to wire racks; cool completely.

Working quickly, spread ice cream onto cupcakes. Freeze until firm, at least 1 hour.

Place marshmallow creme in a large bowl. Add whipping cream; beat until blended and stiff peaks form. Pipe or spread over cupcakes. Decorate with sprinkles. Serve immediately or freeze until firm.

Quote of the Week:

“Our flag does not fly because the wind moves it. It flies with the last breath of each soldier who died protecting it.”

~ Unknown