

Food preservation hotline is open

By Kym Pokorny
Correspondent

CORVALLIS – As canning season gets underway, the Food Preservation hotline from Oregon State University Extension Service starts taking calls July 15.

The toll-free hotline at 800-354-7319 runs until Oct. 18 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. When the hotline is closed, callers can leave a message. The hotline is staffed by certified Master Food Preserver volunteers in Lane and Douglas counties, but is available statewide.

Denise Fennell is the new Master Food Preserver coordinator in Douglas County and works with the volunteers to respond to the thousands of callers that use the hotline each year. Over half the questions are related to food safety.

“It is easy for folks to go

down a ‘rabbit hole’ when searching for information about canning and food safety — and misinformation can be hazardous,” Fennell said. “That’s why the hotline is so important. Our callers know we have reliable, research-based information and our volunteers can guide people to safe and successful food preservation.”

Home food preservation has continued to grow as people show more interest in where their food comes from and how it is prepared.

“We see a lot of home gardeners that are starting to can at home to ensure that their summer bounty of fruits and vegetables don’t go to waste,” she said.

Most commonly, people ask about preserving salsa, tomatoes and tuna. OSU Extension offers publications on each: Salsa Recipes for Canning, Canning Seafood, Canning Tomatoes

and Tomato Products and Safely Canning Foods: Pressure Canners, Pressure Cookers and Electric Pressure Cookers. Search the catalog for “Food Preservation” and you’ll find more publications, including some in Spanish.

Extension’s Ask an Expert, an online question-and-answer service, is another way to get information. Post a question and an expert will get back to you within 48 hours. They can offer information about anything related to food preservation from safety concerns to recipes.

There’s also an app — Canning Timer & Checklist — for more experienced canners that provides reminders of essential steps in the canning process.

Additionally, many Extension offices offer free pressure gauge testing. The hotline volunteers can provide you with information specific to your county.

SPRD luau tickets are available

Sisters Park & Recreation District will bring the Hawaiian Islands back to Sisters on Thursday, August 8, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Village Green City Park. Tickets for the event are available now.

“This is the fifth year for our luau,” said Shannon Rackowski, event coordinator for SPRD. “Last year’s break made for many sad po’o - faces, according to the feedback from the community.”

SPRD will bring back that Aloha Sprint, the mutual affection and regard for all with no obligation in return, with music from headliner Kurt Silva, Halau Uhane Dancers, Sisters Ukulele Players, DJ Chuck Boogie, Halua O Hula Hawaii with Shannon Mokuahi Rackowski and the opening number to be performed by Kane O Hula, Men of Hawaiian Dance — Sisters/Camp Sherman Fire District Firefighters.

Rackowski will be preparing the kaukau (the food) as usual, this year adding a little twist in the menu with teriyaki chicken, along with kalua pig (family recipes)



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER MCNAMEE

Shannon Rackowski dances.

sticky rice and more.

“E Komo Mai, please come join us, bring your blankets and chairs, and get ready to listen to the Hawaiian sounds, watch the dancers entertain, and enjoy the kaukau!” said Rackowski.

Tickets available at SPRD; call 541-549-2091, or purchase online at www.sistersrecreation.com (go to the event section, click on luau then click onto the blue link).



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