

Food for Thought

by Rebecca McGaugh

For those days when you want something hearty, but don't want to heat up the house here are a couple of slow cooker recipes and a couple of simple breads to try.

CHICKEN AND VEGETABLES

1 lb small potatoes, unpeeled, cut into 1-inch pieces
 2 cups cut up carrots, also about 1-inch pieces
 1 cup frozen small whole onions, thawed
 6 boneless skinless chicken thighs (about 1-1/4 lbs)
 1 jar (12 oz) chicken gravy
 1-1/2 cups frozen peas, thawed
 Salt and pepper to taste

Spray 3- to 4-quart slow cooker with cooking spray. In cooker, place potatoes, carrots and onions. Add chicken. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Pour gravy over top.

Cover; cook on low setting 8 to 10 hours.

Stir in peas, increase heat to high, cover and cook about 15 minutes more.

Serves 6.

SLOW COOKER PORK TENDERLOIN

2 lb pork tenderloin
 1 envelope (1 oz) dry onion soup
 1 cup water
 2 T honey
 3/4 cup red wine
 3 T minced garlic
 3 T soy sauce
 pepper to taste

Place pork in slow cooker with soup packet contents. Pour water, wine and soy sauce over the top, turning pork to coat. Spread garlic over the pork. Sprinkle with pepper, cover and cook on low setting for 4 hours. Serve with cooking liquid on the side or over the top.

Serves 6.

EASY BISCUITS

2 cups all-purpose flour
 1/2 tsp salt
 4 tsp baking powder
 1/2 tsp cream of tartar
 2 tsp white sugar
 1/2 cup butter, chilled and diced
 3/4 cup milk (can be low fat or regular)

Preheat oven to 450° degrees.

In a large bowl, sift together dry ingredients. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse oatmeal. Make a well in the center of the dry mixture and pour in the milk. Stir until dough begins to pull together then turn out onto a lightly floured surface.

Press dough together and roll out to 3/4 inch thick. Cut into 2-inch round biscuits and place on an ungreased baking sheet.

Bake in preheated oven for 10 minutes, or until golden. Makes 4 servings.

EASY IRISH SODA BREAD

4 cups all-purpose flour
 4 T white sugar
 1 tsp baking soda
 1 T baking powder
 1/2 tsp salt

1/ cup margarine, softened
 1 cup buttermilk
 1 egg
 1/4 cup butter, melted
 1/4 cup buttermilk

Preheat oven to 375° degrees. Lightly grease a large baking sheet.

In a large bowl, mix together flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, salt and margarine. Stir in 1 cup of buttermilk and egg. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead slightly. Form dough into a round and place on prepared baking sheet. In a small bowl, combine melted butter with 1/4 cup buttermilk; brush loaf with this mixture. Use a sharp knife to cut an 'X' into the top of the loaf.

Bake in preheated oven for 45 to 50 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the loaf comes out clean. You can continue to brush the loaf with the butter mixture while it bakes.

Makes 20 servings.

Children need unstructured play time

Remember when you were a child and summer was the time to play? You may have had some responsibilities, but for the most part, your time was unstructured. Today, children may have more structured time during the summer because of camps, swim lessons and summer school.

Some believe that lack of unstructured time is the reason many teens/young adults have trouble problem solving. The trend of youth being overly reliant on electronics to stay busy and involved leads to a need for immediate gratification.

Summer is also the time for a vacation, but not all family budgets allow one. A staycation

is a vacation that is spent at or nearby your home. The following are some examples of possibly family staycations:

- Backyard exploration: Dig for worms, plant a garden, look at the clouds, watch a spider spin a web, make mud pies, build a fort, run through the sprinkler during the day and catch fireflies at night.

- Community exploration: Visit the local park for a picnic, try out walking trails or play equipment, check out a book from the public library that the family can read together, go to a farmer's market or produce stand to get fresh berries or peaches for homemade ice cream.

- Family exploration: Take time to share family traditions like foods, crafts or hobbies, let your child teach you something new, give your children a disposable camera to capture their perspective of the world.

Whether you take a vacation or a staycation, give yourself and your children some free time to play and explore this summer. The memories of free time can strengthen family bonds through shared experiences, as well as provide a mental vacation during times of stress.

Source: Leanne Spengler, Human development specialist, University of Missouri Extension

Church Directory

VERNONIA FOURSQUARE CHURCH
 Carl Pense, Pastor
 850 Madison Avenue, Vernonia
 503 429-1103
 Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.
 Children's Sunday School

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST
 Larry Gibson, Pastor
 2nd Ave. and Nehalem St., Vernonia
 503 429-8301
 Morning Worship, 11:00 a.m.
 Sabbath School 9:30 a.m.

ASSEMBLY OF GOD
 Wayne and Maureen Marr
 662 Jefferson Ave., Vernonia,
 503 429-0373
 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
 Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
 Rev. Luan Tran, Administrator
 960 Missouri Avenue, Vernonia
 503 429-8841
 Mass Sunday 12:00 Noon
 Religious Educ. Sunday 10:30 a.m.

COVENANT CHURCH VERNONIA
 Pastor John D. Murray
 359 "A" Street, Vernonia
 503 860-3860
 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
 Sunday Worship Service 11:00 a.m.
 Wednesday Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.

VERNONIA COMMUNITY CHURCH
 Ralph Young, Pastor
 957 State Avenue, Vernonia
 503 429-6790
 Sunday Bible Classes 9:00 a.m.
 Family Praise & Worship 10:30 a.m.
 Wednesday Prayer 6:30 p.m.
 Thursday Ladies Study 7:00 p.m.
 Nursery 10:15 a.m.
 Vernonia Community Preschool

VERNONIA CHRISTIAN CHURCH
 Sam Hough, Minister
 410 North Street, Vernonia
 503 429-6522
 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
 Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m.
 (meets in Youth & Family Center)
 Various Home Group Meetings

PIONEER BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP
 John Cahill, Pastor
 939 Bridge Street, Vernonia
 503-429-1161
 www.pbfalive.com
 Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
 Sunday Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
 Thursday Prayer 7:00 p.m.

NEHALEM VALLEY BIBLE CHURCH
 Gary Taylor, Pastor
 Grant & North Streets, Vernonia
 503 429-5378
 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
 Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.
 Nursery available
 Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS
 Marc Farmer, Branch President
 1350 E. Knott Street, Vernonia
 503 429-7151
 Sacrament Meeting, Sunday 10 a.m.
 Sunday School & Primary 11:20 a.m.
 Relief Society, Priesthood and Young Women, Sunday 12:10 p.m.