IN THE KITCHEN WITH LeeAnn

Recipes for New Year

Having almost two weeks of vacation after Christmas was wonderful. I mostly did two of my favorite things – stayed at home and tried new recipes. I tried to rest up and treat my family to some home cooked treats. When school does get back in session it is basketball and judging beauty pageants – another two of my favorite things.

I hope you will give some of these a try. They are all what we call "keepers."

Thanks for reading.

ARTICHOKE CHICKEN

1 (15 oz.) can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese
¾ cup mayonnaise
½ tsp. garlic salt
½ tsp. pepper
4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a medium bowl, mix cheese, mayonnaise, garlic salt, and pepper. Place chicken in a greased baking dish and top with artichoke mixture. Bake for 45 minutes to an hour until chicken is done and no longer pink in center.

BUTTER PECAN POUND CAKE

1 box Butter Pecan cake mix
1 cup water
1 cup vegetable oil
4 eggs
1 (16 oz.) can Coconut Pecan frosting

Mix all ingredients in a large mixing bowl and beat with a handheld mixer until smooth. Pour into a greased Bundt cake pan and bake at 350 degrees for 50 minutes or an hour, until done.

CHICKEN TETRAZZINI

1 (16 oz.) box linguini pasta, cook according to package directions and drain well
1 whole rotisserie chicken, meat removed and chopped
1 can Cream of Chicken soup
1 can Cream of Mushroom soup
1 (16 oz.) carton sour cream
1/3 cup melted butter
½ cup chicken broth
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. pepper
¼ tsp. garlic powder
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
2 cups shredded Mozzarella cheese
2 tsp. dried parsley flakes

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and lightly spray a 9 x 13 inch baking dish with cooking spray. In a large bowl, combine chopped chicken, soups, sour cream, butter, salt, pepper, and garlic powder; stir in cooked pasta. Pour mixture into prepared baking dish and top with cheeses and parsley. Cover with foil and bake, covered for 45 minutes; remove foil and bake an additional 15 minutes until cheese is melted and mixture is bubbly.

CAKE MIX TOFFEE BARS

1 box yellow cake mix
1 egg
6 Tbsp. butter, melted
2 (10 oz.) bags chocolate toffee bits
1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees; spray a 9 x 13 inch baking dish with cooking spray. Combine cake mix, butter, and egg; press into bottom of prepared pan. Sprinkle chocolate toffee bits on top of cake mixture. Pour sweetened condensed milk evenly over toffee bits. Bake for 30 minutes and cool completely before cutting.

TACO PARTY TOASTS

1 ½ lbs. ground beef
1 pkg. Taco seasoning
1 (10 oz.) can Ro-Tel chopped tomatoes, do not drain
1 (16 oz.) pkg. Velveeta cheese, cubed
1 (16 oz.) loaf cocktail rye bread

Brown ground beef; drain fat. Add taco seasoning and tomatoes and cook for about 3 minutes; remove from heat. Add Velveeta and stir until melted. Spread mixture on top of bread slices and bake at 350 degrees for about 20 minutes.

Lee Ann Fleming is a Holmes County native, food columnist and has garnered fame for her recipes featured in the film, **The Help. Fleming can be reached at lafkitchen@hughes.net.*

DAVE Says

By Dave Ramsey

Don't play the game

Dear Dave,

How do you feel about timeshares, and the free trips and dinners they offer as part of their sales pitches? Is it possible to win with these things?

Dan

Dear Dan,

In my opinion, timeshares are a complete waste of time and money. Lots of folks go into this kind of thing believing they'll play the game and win. They think they'll get a vacation weekend and other free stuff, then just say "no" when the time comes. The problem is, most people aren't as tough a sell as they think. Besides, do you really want to waste a weekend of your life letting some pushy salesperson twist your arm? That's not my idea of fun.

As a whole, timeshares have an incredibly high dissatisfaction rate. It's almost impossible to find anyone who's happy they bought into one, and there are good reasons for this. Why would you pay thousands of your hard-earned dollars for a tiny place you may or may not get a chance to visit once a year? Add to this the fact that you have no equity in the place, and you're stuck paying ongoing maintenance fees.

My advice? Don't take a chance playing the game, Dan. There are much better uses for your time and money!

Dave

Paid in full?

Dear Dave,

I've been late on a credit card bill several times, and it was turned over to a collection agency. They have offered a couple of different payment options. If I agree to one of these, does that mean the original creditor gets paid, too?

Carter

Dear Carter,

A collection agency either owns the debt outright, or they're directly representing the credit card company in these kinds of situations. It's not unusual for things to be handled this way when someone has defaulted on a loan.

Unless you have the cash to make good on the debt outright, I'd go ahead and accept whichever deal makes the most sense for you and your current financial situation.

You've already got a mark against you on your credit report for having this turned over to collections, so an indication of settlement on a credit card you defaulted on is really no big deal.

But here's my best piece of advice—stop using credit cards!

—Dave

**Dave Ramsey is CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored seven best-selling books, including The Total Money Makeover.*

The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 13 million listeners each week on 585 radio stations and multiple digital platforms.

Follow Dave on the web at daveramsey.com and on Twitter at @DaveRamsey.

Durant News

by Rowena Hill

The many Durant friends of Mrs. C.H. (Dot) Blanton are thankful she is feeling well again. She spent time with daughter Beth while recovering from being in the hospital.

Rob Irby spent time this week in the home of his mother. It was good to have him "home" again.

Mr. Francis Brantley of Conway, Arkansas visited relatives and friends in Jackson before coming to Durant for a visit. It's always good to have visits from family and friends. Welcome "home" Francis.

Eddy Johnson was a patient in a hospital this week. Hope to see him feeling well again shortly.

Prayers continue for Mrs. Joe (Mary Evelyn) Dickerson Crowder, also for William Henry Hathcock. May God bless and heal these and others. Our prayer and concern for all those who aren't well.

Mr. and Mrs. Derek May (Jodi Hill) and children are doing a good work in Thailand, serving as missionaries. May God continue using them in His work. We still miss them but are grateful they are being used by God and in his service.

Sympathy is for those who have recently lost loved ones.

Mrs. Leonard (Peggy Greer) Cain was buried last Friday at the Sallis Cemetery after an illness of many years.

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