This week, we will feature comfort food... Casseroles!
Nothing says "Minnesota Winter" better than a warm, homecooked casserole.
Enjoy!

Amish Breakfast Casserole

Prep: 15 min.
Cook: 35 min.
Servings: 12

1 lb. sliced bacon, diced
1 med. sweet onion, chopped
6 large eggs, lightly beaten
4 C. frozen shredded hash brown potatoes, thawed
2 C. shredded cheddar cheese
1-1/2 C. 4% cottage cheese
1-1/4 C. shredded Swiss cheese

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large skillet, cook bacon and onion over medium heat until bacon is crisp; drain. In a large bowl, combine remaining ingredients; stir in bacon mixture. Transfer to a greased 13x9-in. baking dish.

Bake, uncovered, until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean, 35-40 min. Let stand 10 min. before cutting.

Red Potato Casserole

Prep: 25 min.
Cook: 20 min.
Servings: 8

16 small red potatoes (about 1-3/4 lbs.)
1/2 C. 2% milk
1/4 C. butter, cubed
1/2 tsp. pepper
1/8 tsp. salt
1-1/2 C. shredded cheddar cheese, divided
1/2 C. crumbled cooked bacon
1 C. sour cream
2 T. minced fresh chives

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place potatoes in a 6-qt. stockpot; add water to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook, uncovered, until tender, 15-20 min. Drain; return to pot.

Mash potatoes, gradually adding milk, butter, pepper and salt. Spread into a greased 3-qt. baking dish and sprinkle with 1 cup cheese and bacon. Dollop with sour cream; sprinkle with remaining cheese.

Bake, uncovered, until heated through and cheese is melted, 20-25 min. Top with chives just before serving.

Poor Man's Casserole

Prep: 20 min.
Cook: 1 hr.
Servings: 8

12 oz. uncooked extra-wide egg noodles
1 block (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
1 tub (8 oz.) sour cream
1-1/2 lbs. ground beef
1/2 C. chopped onion
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 tsp. Italian seasoning
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
1 can (29 oz.) tomato sauce
1-1/2 C. shredded cheddar cheese or shredded cheddar-Monterey Jack cheese, divided
1/2 C. grated Parmesan cheese
Chopped fresh parsley, for garnish

Preheat oven to 350F°; grease a 13x9-in. baking dish.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add egg noodles; cook according to package directions until al dente. Drain; return to the pot.

While the noodles cook, stir together softened cream cheese and sour cream in a large bowl. Stir mixture into the pot with the hot, cooked noodles until completely coated; set aside.

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat; add ground beef and onion. Cook 9-10 min. or until browned, breaking it up with a wooden spoon as it cooks. Drain off excess grease. Stir in garlic, Italian seasoning, salt, pepper and red pepper flakes; cook 2-3 min. or until fragrant. Stir in tomato sauce. Simmer 4-5 min.; remove pan from the heat.

To assemble the casserole, spread 1/3 of the meat sauce in the bottom of the prepared baking dish. Top with half of the creamy noodles, spreading into an even layer. Sprinkle 1/2 cup shredded cheese over the top. Repeat layers, then spread the remaining meat sauce on top. Sprinkle the last 1/2 cup of shredded cheese and the Parmesan cheese on top.

Bake 25-30 min. or until sauce is bubbling and the cheese is melted and lightly browned. Transfer pan to a cooling rack or trivet. Top with chopped fresh parsley, if desired. Serve hot.

Cornbread Taco Bake

Prep: 20 min.
Cook: 25 min.
Servings: 6

1-1/2 lbs. ground beef
1 can (15-1/4 oz.) whole kernel corn, drained
1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce
1/2 C. water
1/2 C. chopped green pepper
1 envelope taco seasoning
1 package (8-1/2 oz.) cornbread/muffin mix
1 can (2.8 oz.) french-fried onions, divided
1/3 C. shredded cheddar cheese

In a large skillet, cook beef over medium heat until no longer pink, breaking it into crumbles; drain. Stir in the corn, tomato sauce, water, green pepper and taco seasoning. Spoon into a greased 2-qt. baking dish.
Prepare cornbread mix according to package directions for cornbread. Stir in half the onions. Spread over beef mixture. Bake, uncovered, at 400F° for 20 min.
Sprinkle with cheese and remaining onions. Bake until cheese is melted and a toothpick inserted into cornbread layer comes out clean, 3-5 min. longer.

Chili Cheese Dog Casserole

Prep: 20 min.
Cook: 30 min.
Servings: 6

1 pkg. (8-1/2 oz.) cornbread/muffin mix
1 T. olive oil
1 C. chopped green pepper
1/2 C. chopped onion
1/2 C. chopped celery
1 pkg. (1 lb.) hot dogs, halved lengthwise and cut into bite-sized pieces
1 can (15 oz.) chili with beans
2 T. brown sugar
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 tsp. chili powder
1 C. shredded cheddar cheese, divided

Preheat oven to 350F°. Prepare cornbread batter according to package directions. Spread half the batter into a greased 8-in. square baking dish.
In a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat; add green pepper, onion and celery. Cook and stir until crisp-tender, 5-7 min. Stir in hot dogs; cook and stir until lightly browned, 3-4 min. longer. Stir in chili, brown sugar, garlic powder and chili powder; heat through. Stir in 3/4 C. cheese.
Spoon hot dog mixture over cornbread batter; top with remaining batter. Sprinkle with remaining 1/4 C. cheese.
Bake, uncovered, until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, about 30 min. Let stand 5 min. before serving.

Chicken Noodle Casserole

Prep: 20 min.
Cook: 30 min.
Servings: 8

6 C. uncooked egg noodles (about 12 oz.)
2 cans (10-3/4 oz. each) condensed cream of chicken soup, undiluted
1 C. sour cream
3/4 C. 2% milk
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
3 C. cubed cooked chicken breasts
1 C. crushed Ritz crackers (about 20 crackers)
1/4 C. butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350F°. Cook noodles according to package directions for al dente; drain.
In a large bowl, whisk soup, sour cream, milk, salt and pepper until blended. Stir in chicken and noodles. Transfer to a greased 13x9-in. baking dish. In a small bowl, mix crushed crackers and butter; sprinkle over top. Bake until bubbly, 30-35 min.

Cheesy Chicken Pasta Casserole

Prep: 35 min.
Cook: 45 min.
Servings: 4

1-1/2 C. uncooked penne pasta
1 T. canola oil
1 lb. boneless skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces

1/2 C. chopped onion
1/2 C. chopped green pepper
1/2 C. chopped sweet red pepper
1 tsp. dried basil
1 tsp. dried oregano
1 tsp. dried parsley flakes
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 can (14-1/2 oz.) diced tomatoes, undrained
3 T. tomato paste
3/4 C. chicken broth
2 C. shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
1/2 C. grated Romano cheese
Minced fresh parsley, optional

Preheat oven to 350F°. Cook pasta according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, heat oil over medium heat. Add the chicken, onion, peppers and seasonings; saute until chicken is no longer pink. Add garlic; cook 1 minute longer.

In a blender, pulse diced tomatoes and tomato paste, covered, until blended. Add to chicken mixture. Stir in broth; bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat; cover and simmer until slightly thickened, 10-15 min.

Drain pasta; toss with chicken mixture. Spoon half the mixture into a greased 2-qt. baking dish. Sprinkle with half the cheeses. Repeat layers.

Cover and bake 30 min. Uncover; bake until heated through, 15-20 min. longer. If desired, garnish with parsley.

Angel Hair Shrimp Bake

Prep: 25 min.
Cook: 25 min.
Servings: 8

1 pkg. (9 oz.) refrigerated angel hair pasta
1-1/2 lbs. uncooked shrimp (31-40 per lb.), peeled and deveined
3/4 C. crumbled feta cheese
1/2 C. shredded Swiss cheese
1 jar (16 oz.) chunky salsa
1/2 C. shredded Monterey Jack cheese
3/4 C. minced fresh parsley
1 tsp. dried basil
1 tsp. dried oregano
2 lg. eggs
1 C. half-and-half cream
1 C. plain yogurt
Chopped fresh parsley, optional

In a greased 13x9-in. baking dish, layer half the pasta, shrimp, feta cheese, Swiss cheese and salsa. Repeat layers. Sprinkle with the Monterey Jack cheese, parsley, basil and oregano.

In a bowl, whisk the eggs, cream and yogurt; pour over casserole. Bake, uncovered, at 350F° for 25-30 min. or until a thermometer reads 160°. Let stand 5 min. before serving. If desired, top with chopped parsley.

Quote of the Week:

"I always told my kids, 'The greatest thing you can do for yourself is to do something positive for someone else.'"

~ Gary Sinise