

This & That

TOPS is Looking

TOPS Headquarters is looking for stories from you, your chapters and your members on the following topics.
Stress: coping strategies, success stories, overcoming stress, any stress-related stories that might help us to tie in with **Stress Awareness Month.**
It's My Time (TOPS' 2009-2010 Theme): stories of activities, events, ideas, and successes in keeping with this time-oriented theme.
Cut and Burn Challenge (President's Challenge for 2009-2010): ideas for tie-in and achievement of this challenge, progress reports, suggestions for recognition, and successes.
General: We always welcome your ideas for unique, informative and unusual story topics. Please share any and all stories of personal success, unique situations, anecdotes, publicity efforts, and anything else that we can share with our readers to inspire members and encourage chapters.

OPEN HOUSES

When your chapter has decided on a date for an Open House, please contact me as soon as possible so that I can put your date on my calendar and also send you some materials to pass out.

CHOICES

There is a choice you have to make
In everything you do!
And you must always keep in mind,
The choice you make, makes you!

"I shall shape my future. Whether I fail or succeed shall be no man's doing but my own. I am the force; I can clear any obstacle before me. Or I can be lost in the maze. My choice. My responsibility. Win or lose, only I hold the key to my destiny."

-Anonymous

RECIPE CORNER

It is time for hot soup so here are a couple recipes to try.

Low Calorie Chili Con Carne

2 cups of ground beef
1 cup of finely chopped onion
1 clove finely crushed garlic
2 tablespoons of chili powder
one 10 1/2 ounce can of condensed undiluted tomato soup
one 15 ounce can of kidney beans
1 tablespoon of malt vinegar
1/4 teaspoon of salt
Brown beef in hot pan; stir in onion, garlic and chili powder. Cook, stirring often until onion is tender; add rest of ingredients. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally about 15 minutes. Calories: 250 per serving Exchanges: 1 serving = 1 bread, 1/2 fat, 2 meat, 1 Vegetable

Taco Soup

1/2 pound extra-lean ground beef
1/2 cup chopped onion
1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes
1 15-ounce can tomato sauce
1 15-ounce can corn, drained
1 15-ounce can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
1 Tbsp ground chili powder
1 1/2 tsp ground cumin
1/8 tsp ground red pepper
Place a large, heavy-bottomed pot over medium-high heat and add the ground beef and chopped onion.
Separate the ground beef with a fork.
Cook the beef and onions, stirring occasionally, until the beef is no longer pink and the onions are soft.
Add the next 7 ingredients, through the ground red pepper, and stir until all of the ingredients are evenly distributed.
Simmer the soup over medium heat for 15 minutes and serve warm.
Serves 6
Per Serving Calories 197, Calories from Fat 13, Total Fat 1.5g, Cholesterol 30mg, sodium 570mg, Pro 15g, CHO 31g, Fiber 7

Let your head be more than a funnel to your stomach.

OUR AREA NEWS

January/February, 2010

Valentine's Day

Like most many modern celebrations, the origins of Valentine's Day can be traced back to Pagan times. In ancient Rome, February 14th was a day honoring Juno, the Goddess of women and marriage and Queen of the Roman Gods and Goddesses. The following day, February 15th, began the Feast of Lupercalia, a festival of love honoring Juno.

Love lotteries were an important component of the celebration which took place on the eve of the festival. The names of girls were written on slips of paper and placed into jars. Young men would draw a girl's name from the jar, making these two partners for the duration of the festival. So even though they weren't yet called by the name, these early Romans were in fact the first Valentines.

Of course, the early Christians frowned on such erotic goings-ons. Despite their best PR efforts, the church's attempts to convince celebrants to substitute the names of saints for would-be lovers was not met with much enthusiasm, especially since the participants were encouraged to emulate their chosen patron saint's virtues for the coming year. Instead the church settled for toning down the nature of Lupercalia from eroticism to romance. Saint Valentine or Valentinus, who had been martyred on February 14th 269 A.D., proved a convenient symbol around which to fashion this new celebration of romance.

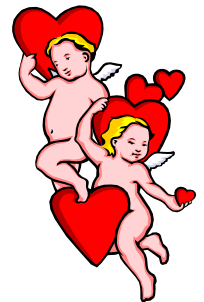
While evidence suggests the saint was himself a chaste man, legend has it he defied Emperor Claudius II by secretly marrying countless couples, a practice the emperor had banned believing that marriage weakened his army. Eventually Claudius caught on and the good saint was condemned and beaten to death. Another legend has it that Valentinus had befriended his jailer's daughter during his imprisonment. He left her a farewell letter signed (you guessed it) "From Your Valentine".

In 496 AD Pope Gelasius set aside February 14 to honor St. Valentine, who became the patron saint of lovers. Gradually, February 14 became a day for exchanging love messages and simple gifts.

The practice of lottery drawings to select Valentines persisted well into the eighteenth century, but a gradual shift took place in which the gift giving became the sole responsibility of the man. This marked the beginning of the end and the practice eventually disappeared and individuals were at last free to select their own Valentines. Manufactured Valentine cards didn't appear until the end of the eighteenth century. The Victorians took the cards to elaborate lengths, trimming them with lace, silks, and satins, and embellishing them with special details like feathers, flowers, golf leaf, hand painted details, and even sweetly perfumed sachets.

Until the mid-1800's, the cost of sending mail was beyond the means of the average person, and the recipient, not the sender, was expected to pay the cost of mailing. It wasn't until the advent of the penny post that the modern custom of sending Valentine's cards really gained critical mass. Today,

Valentines Day is the second most popular occasion for sending greeting cards, only surpassed by Christmas. Remember flowers and cards before **CANDY!!!**



Marsha's Columns

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Remember: Cut and Burn Challenge making small changes produces big results. We can do this!! Please at least consider this great challenge.

NEWS

If you have information you would like to share with everyone please send it or email it to me mapiatt@aol.com and I will include it in my newsletter. I do publish one every two months.

ELECTIONS

You do realize this is middle of January and our chapter elections will be coming up in about 6 weeks. It is not too soon to be thinking of officers. I suggest you have a "candidates night". Have your current officers tell about their offices and what is involved so any members that might be thinking of running has a chance to think it over. You might be surprised at who might become interested and "new blood" in a chapter is usually refreshing!



Congratulations to New Members

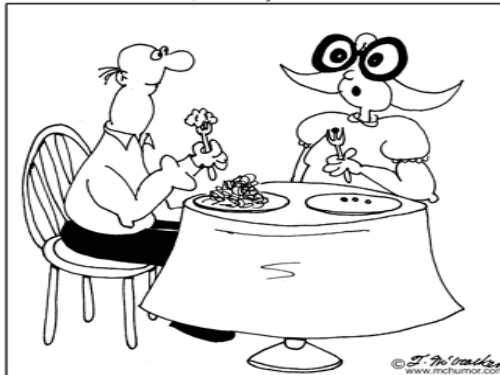
Congratulations to all chapters that have enrolled new members. Remember each new member headquarters receive your chapter number goes into a drawing for \$250 to be held next year at IRD. Each Regional Director will draw one chapter from their area so the more new members you bring in the better chance you have of winning.

NEWS

I am sorry to say that I will not be the Area Captain any longer for Trumbull County. You will be getting a new captain soon. I want to take this opportunity to say it has been a pleasure to work with the chapters in Trumbull County. I am sure you will be pleased with your new captain.

On the other hand I am please to announce that as of January 1 I have been appointed the Area Captain for Summit County. I will have Summit and Portage Counties. If there is anything I can help you with please let me know. I am looking forward to meeting the chapters in Summit County.

MCHUMOR.com by T. McCracken



"These are my dieting glasses. They magnify the food so I think I'm eating more than I really am."

©T. McCracken mchumor.com

Twas The Month After Christmas

Twas the month after Christmas and all through the house
Nothing would fit me, not even a blouse.
The cookies I'd nibbled, the eggnog I'd taste.
All the holiday parties had gone to my waist.
When I got on the scales there arose such a number!
When I walked to the store (less a walk than a lumber).
I'd remember the marvelous meals I'd prepared;
The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rared,
The wine and the rum balls, the bread and the cheese
And the way I'd never said, "No thank you, please."
As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt
And prepared once again to do battle with dirt---
I said to myself, as I only can
"You can't spend a winter disguised as a man!"
So--away with the last of the sour cream dip,
Get rid of the fruit cake, every cracker and chip
Every last bit of food that I like must be banished
Till all the additional ounces have vanished.
I won't have a cookie--not even a lick.
I'll want only to chew on a long celery stick.
I won't have hot biscuits, or corn bread, or pie,
I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.
I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore---
But isn't that what January is for?
Unable to giggle, no longer a riot.
Happy New Year to all and to all a good diet!



A Midnight Raid
Half a loaf, half a loaf,
Half a loaf onward.
All in the belly at once,
Toasted and buttered.
"Downward the raisin bread,
Charge past the gums!" she said.
Into the belly, the crunch
Echoed and sputtered.
"Forward the Midnight Raid!
Slather the marmalade!"
(Not tho' the sleeper knew
Someone had plundered.)
Ice cream and pizza pie,
Hers not to pass 'em by.
Choc'late chip by the batch,
Scavenged and down the hatch.
Mirror to right of her
Mirror to left of her
Mirror behind her,
Back to the cupboard.
"Diet begins at dawn,
After the food's all gone,"
Humblly she blubbered.
Don't let this be you!!!



Weight loss tips after the holidays

The first thing to do once the holidays are over is to assess your situation. There is no need to panic or rush into deprivation diets. What you need to do is to get on the scale and see how much weight (if any), you gained during the holidays. Depending on the amount of pounds you got you will set out your plan. Your goal should be to get back to the same situation and weight levels you had before the holidays. The best way to achieve that is to get into your weight loss schedule as usual. Do not try any **rapid weight loss** techniques to lose the extra weight fast. This will not work. Instead try to follow your 'normal' plan for a couple of weeks and if you notice that the extra pounds did not go away then start a more aggressive plan for about 3-4 weeks. This will get you back on the right track.