

**MADISON LIFESTYLE &
LEARNING CENTER**
1282 Hughes Road
Madison, AL 35758
256.772.6242



THE MADISON MESSENGER – 4TH QUARTER, 2021 - ISSUE #14



GREETINGS!

WOW! Can you believe that it is already October? Where has this year gone? Just six short months ago, the Madison Lifestyle & Learning Center reopened after a 13-month pandemic closure. Now, we are looking at crisp, autumn days, frost on pumpkins, tricks and treats, thankful blessings, and the hustle and bustle of holiday shopping. At the Madison Lifestyle & Learning Center, we continue to look forward in offering a diverse variety of activities designed for actively aging adults. We constantly analyze registrations in order to improve our programs. To view all offerings at the center, check the center's website page (www.madisonal.gov/235/Senior-Center) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com – Madison City Senior Center) for the most up-to-date information. Remember that all activities require **PREREGISTRATION**.

PREREGISTRATION INFORMATION

Many have asked why we require preregistration, and simply it is because it helps us to provide programming best suited to meet the scheduling routines of the active adult community. Preregistration provides an accurate account of interests and staffing requirements. Additional benefits include meeting safety issues of capacity according to fire and health codes. So, how exactly do you preregister for an activity? Once you select the activity/activities in which you want to participate, you may preregister in any one of the following ways:

- Call the center's main number [256-772-6242](tel:256-772-6242), and select option 1.
- Send an email to seniorcenterinfo@madisonal.gov
- Text a message to 256-658-1576
- When at the center, stop by the reception desk and provide your name, activity for which you wish to participate, and the date.
- Online registration through MyActiveCenter.com

For options 1-4, you may preregister for activities a week at a time, while online preregistration provides an expanded registration timeframe. So preview the Activities Descriptions on our website, then check out the current month's Activities Calendar to see when the activities are scheduled, and finally, select the most convenient method above to complete your preregistration.

PREREGISTERING WITH MyActiveCenter.com

We are super excited about the availability of online registration. To preregister for an activity:

1. Go to MyActiveCenter.com
2. Select your local center (Madison Senior Center) and type in your MySeniorCenter Kay Tag number and home phone number (number furnished on your updated information sheet).

3. You will then create an account with a username and password.
4. Once you have activated your account, you can preregister for activities. When you enroll in an activity, it appears on your My Activities page.

If you and your spouse share an email address, you can add your spouse to your account from the My Account page.

Please note, if you requested removal from the automated Voice Connect system, you will not be able to use MyActiveCenter.com for preregistration.

NUTRITION CORNER:

As we continue our quest toward healthier lifestyles, we are providing nutrition tips to not only help you eat better, but we also include a delicious recipe as inspiration. We do enjoy hearing from you, so remember to share your creations by posting pictures and comments on our Facebook page.

NUTRITION TIP OF THE MONTH:

In continuing in our theme of focusing on some of the pitfalls of fast food, we are looking at another favorite fast-food genre in this issue. When we are out and about and hunger strikes, fast food is a very attractive option. It is usually inexpensive, satisfying to the taste buds, and best of all, convenient. Remember though, fast food is

typically loaded with calories, sodium, and unhealthy fat, many times a day's worth of each in a single meal. These food choices also tend to be low in nutrients and almost totally lacking in fruits, vegetables, and fiber. If you are watching your weight and/or health, finding a healthy, well-balanced meal at a fast food restaurant can be somewhat challenging. So, what are you craving: finger licking fried chicken, Taco Tuesday, Fish Fry Friday, or that cheeseburger in Paradise? Can any of these cravings actually qualify as healthy fast food?

In past issues, we looked at burger chains and chicken chains. Since many of us do crave Taco Tuesday, our focus this month will shift to an international flair by checking out Mexican chains. Mexican fast food restaurants can be good options for finding healthy fast food, but they can also be caloric minefields, especially when it comes to burritos, nachos, and other cheese-laden items. Portion control is also important, since the serving size of many Mexican fast food items is enormous. In order to enjoy what you want without blowing your diet, simply eat half and take the rest home to enjoy for another meal.

Several Mexican chains, including Taco Bell and Baja Fresh, have "healthy" menu options that are lower in fat and calories. You can also find healthier choices at chains such as Chipotle and Taco Del Mar, including whole-wheat tortillas and fresh vegetables. However, their portions are still huge, so limiting the amount you eat in one sitting is key.

Here are suggested tips for making smarter choices at Mexican fast food restaurants:

- Go easy on the rice and beans (including in your burrito). These starchy foods add hundreds of calories to your meal.
- Skip the sour cream, which can add 100 to 200 calories. For a healthier option, add avocado or guacamole.
- Say no to the chips. While tasty, they add hundreds of calories (285 calories for a half order from Chipotle) and sodium that is not needed.
- Look for Baja-style fish dishes. Fish is usually the healthiest meat choice – as long as it's not fried.
- Opt for soft tortillas. Whether made of flour or corn, soft tortillas are lower in fat and calories than crispy, deep-fried shells. Soft corn tortillas are also usually healthier than soft flour tortillas.
- While difficult, try holding the cheese. You may be surprised how little you miss it in your burrito or taco, and omitting the cheese can save you over 100

calories.

- Load up on fajita veggies. Adding them to your burrito or burrito bowl is an easy way to add extra flavor and heart-healthy vitamins and phytochemicals without adding a lot of cheese.

So, if you are doing the Taco Tuesday run for dinner this week, here are some great substitutions to make that dining experience healthier:

Instead of the crispy shell taco, ask for the soft taco option. Pass on the ground beef or steak and ask for grilled fish or chicken. Forgo refried beans or pinto beans and opt for black beans instead. Substitute the grilled “fresco”-style steak burrito for the crunch wraps or gordita-type burritos. Finally, enjoy the veggie and bean burrito as opposed to the beef or steak burrito.

We realize that giving up fast food is difficult, and these days, with our busy schedules, next to impossible. However, if you plan ahead, take time to review your options, and make wise choices, you can enjoy fast foods in ways to help you stay on the healthy lifestyle track.

Did you get a chance to try last issue’s recipe for Oatmeal with Peanut and Banana? Since we focused on Mexican fast food chains, this issue’s recipe will continue with the south of the border theme by sharing a healthy, vegetable-laden chili, complete with a cheesy cornbread topping.

RECIPE: CHEESY CORNBREAD-TOPPED CHILI

- 2 cups onion, diced
- 2 cups celery, diced
- 2 cups red pepper, diced
- 2 cups carrot, diced
- 15 oz. can fire-roasted tomato
- 15 oz. can red kidney bean
- 15 oz. can chickpeas
- 15 oz. can black beans
- 15 oz. can corn
- 1 package taco seasoning
- Salt and pepper to taste

- 1 box cornbread mix, prepared per instructions on box
- 2 cups reduced-fat, Mexican blend cheese

- Fresh cilantro
- Low-fat sour cream
- Sliced avocados

Preparation

1. Sauté onions, celery, red peppers, and carrots in a pan. Salt and pepper to taste.
2. Mix in package of taco seasoning.
3. Add fire-roasted tomatoes, kidney beans, chickpeas, black beans, and corn.
4. Simmer for 15 minutes.
5. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
6. Prepare boxed cornbread mix according to box instructions. Fold in the cheese.
7. Spread cheesy cornbread batter over chili.
8. Bake at 375°F (190°C) for 20 minutes.
9. Let cool for a few minutes, then garnish with cilantro, sour cream, and avocado.
10. Buen provecho!

WEATHER FOLKLORE:

When deer are in a gray coat in October, expect a hard winter. If there is much rain in October, then there will be much wind in December. A warm October means a cold February. If November 25 is fair or foul, so will be the next February. The weather in November repeats itself in February. Flowers in bloom late in autumn indicate a bad winter. If the ice in November will bear a ducky, there will be nothing thereafter but sleet and muck.

If December is changeable and mild, the whole winter will remain a child. A wet fall indicates a cold and early winter. Lengthened winter and tardy spring are both good for hay and grain, but bad for corn and garden. If there is thunder during Christmas week, the winter will be anything but meek. The nearer the New Moon to Christmas day, the harder the winter.

AGING WELL:

We continue our shift toward programming designed to help clients maintain independence by embracing more fit lifestyles. Remember, not participating in marathons or triathlete events, does not mean that you cannot begin your journey to a healthy lifestyle. The easiest way to get to that level: **START**. Remember, an easy, low-cost, no-frills activity is to “walk the dog,” even if you do not have a dog.

So, why should you exercise and increase your physical activity? Check out these benefits, and then decide.

- Exercise reduces your risks for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and certain types of cancer.
- It makes bones and muscles stronger, which can reduce the risk of falls and fractures.
- Exercise improves blood flow; thus, increasing the body’s ability to deliver oxygen and nutrients to cells
- It reduces symptoms of arthritis.
- Your body and mind test younger than your physical age.
- It reduces illness
- It helps you to sleep better
- It is good for your brain as it improves learning and memory

Not sure where to start your fitness journey? Check out some of the great options offered by our center.

100 ALABAMA MILES:

With cooler days, lower humidity, and colorful fall foliage, now is an excellent time to participate in the 100 Alabama Miles Challenge. Remember, you can sign up at any time for this event. Designed to kick-start an active, healthy lifestyle, while exploring the natural beauty of the state, participants can walk, run, hike, bike, swim, paddle, ride, or roll 100 miles each year by visiting Alabama’s parks, nature preserves, and rivers. For information, visit to the following link for suggestions and events:

<https://100alabamamiles.org/content/about-100-alabama-miles>

ACTIVE ADULT STROLLING:

Join your friends on Monday and Wednesday from 10:15 am to 11:15 am at the Lifestyle & Learning Center on Hughes Road for an enjoyable stroll around the area. Feel free to walk around the parking lot, the track out behind the center, on the sidewalk along Hughes Road, or the tennis courts (if not occupied). With so many options, new adventures await you on every stroll. Grab those walking shoes, a bottle of water, your BFF, and enjoy a little fresh air and exercise. Please note this is a self-directed activity.

ACTIVE ADULT WATER AEROBICS/LAP SWIMMING:

Active Adult water aerobics are available at Dublin Park for clients who are 60 or older and residents of Madison City. These exercises can help reduce the risk of heart disease without the high-impact of traditional cardio workouts. They also provide benefits for balance, coordination, and mobility. If organized swimming activities are not for you, lap swimming is available. You can enjoy both of these activities at Dublin Park on Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30 am to 10:30 am. If you wish to participate in swimming activities, please check in at the front desk located at Dublin Park. If you have any questions, call the center at [256-772-6242](tel:256-772-6242).

BALANCE CLASS:

Many of you have requested it, so the Balance Class is making its return to the Lifestyle and Learning Center. Designed to keep you moving, this class is a fun, high-energy, low-impact workout class that utilizes stretch bands, weights, and playground balls. The class meets Monday and Wednesday, 9:00 am to 10:00 am. If you would like to participate, remember that you **MUST PREREGISTER.**

BILLIARDS:

We have two beautiful Diamond pool tables in our billiards room. If you are interested in playing, we have three time slots available daily. Available times are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 10:00 am, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm, or 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Therefore, if you would like to enjoy a lively game or two of billiards, you **MUST PREREGISTER IN ORDER TO PLAY.**

CHAIR EXERCISES:

Are you looking for a low-impact, yet challenging workout that is also a blast? Then you definitely need to check into our **CHAIR EXERCISES.** These chair-based classes are an excellent way to improve balance and flexibility, and are an integral part of helping you be more active and healthier. We now offer two sessions of the classes with drumming classes on Monday and Wednesday from 10:30 am to 11:15 am and chair yoga on Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00 am to 11:30 am. In order to comply with ADSS guidelines and maintain a socially distanced environment, **YOU MUST PREREGISTER.**

DIVINELY WALKING:

Grab your water bottle, lace up those walking shoes, slather on some sunscreen, and make plans to meet up with your friends for Divinely Walking at Dublin Park on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30am to 10:30am. At Dublin Park, several options exist for your walking pleasure, including the indoor track, around the parking lot, or the winding trail around the soccer fields. If you wish to participate in this activity, check in at the front desk located at Dublin Park. If you have questions, please call the center at [256-772-6242](tel:256-772-6242).

LINE DANCING FOR FUN & FITNESS:

Did you know that dancing is one of the most enjoyable ways to exercise? It is great for losing weight, building strong bones, improving posture and muscle strength, increasing balance and coordination, and beating stress. So, if you like to jump or jive, tap or tango, and are looking for a fun way to exercise, then you might want to consider Line Dancing for Fun & Fitness. In this class, you learn the basics of line dancing and improve your fitness as well. This class meets on Tuesday and Thursdays from 9:15 am to 10:15 am. As with all center activities, **PREREGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.**

BIG GREEN BUS:

The Big Green Bus, part of the Huntsville Hospital Mobile Medical Unit, returns to the Center on the fourth Wednesday, of the month from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm. This unit promotes preventative health care. The unit's nurses perform blood pressure checks, as well as glucose screenings. There is no charge, and all ages are welcome to visit the bus. To assist the unit in preparing for the number of participants, **PREREGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.**

CARD PLAY:

Do you enjoy playing Bridge, Rook, and/or Pinochle, and are looking to join in with others who share your love of cards, then, you will want to reserve a spot in one of the two daily sessions of Card Play. Available times are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 11:00 am or 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm. **PREREGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.**

CHALK & TALK:

Regina from Comfort Care Huntsville will be hosting a monthly Chalk & Talk session. In this activity, you get to create a painted piece to take home and enjoy. Regina furnishes the supplies, so bring your creative spirit, and join us on the third Monday from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm. Capacity is limited to 12 participants, and as with all activities, **PREREGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.**

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS:

Do you long for the simple days of youth spent with a new box of crayons? If so, then you will want to **PREREGISTER** for the Creative Expressions coloring sessions on Tuesday afternoons from 1:15 pm to 2:15 pm.

GRAB & GO HOT MEALS:

A limited number of Grab & Go hot meals are available for drive-through pickup Monday through Friday, 11:15 am – 11:45 am, and are by reservation **ONLY**. If you are interested in Grab & Go meals, please contact Michele at **256-774-4416** in order to be placed in rotation. To be eligible, you must be 60 years of age or older and a Lifestyle & Learning Center client with current TARCOG paperwork on file. If you are interested in this program, and you need an application for lunch, contact the center's main number at **256-772-6242** for information.

PLEASE NOTE: No meals served on the following dates:

October 11, Columbus Day
November 11, Veteran's Day
November 25 - 26, Thanksgiving
December 24 through December 31, Christmas (meals will resume on January 3)

LearningQUEST:

LearningQUEST is a non-profit volunteer-led organization for adults of all ages, dedicated to building a learning community through educational and enrichment opportunities. LearningQuest is partnered with the Huntsville Madison County Public Library. For information and registration for the fall program, please contact LearningQUEST at www.lquest.org, 256-529-8695, or learningquest.email@gmail.com

LearningQUEST: NATURE INSPIRED LIVING

Join Steve Jones, Ph.D. as he leads virtual hikes through breathtaking local "wildlands." Dr. Jones will be at the center on Fridays through October 15 from 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm. **PREREGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.**

LET'S GET CRAFTING:

Each month, Teresa Allison from the Madison Library leads a creative make-and-take seasonal craft workshop. These workshops are scheduled for the first Friday of the month from 10:00 am to 11:00. As in the past, Teresa furnishes all the supplies for this craft, and you supply your creativity and enthusiasm. For a description of the month's planned activity, please visit the center's website and/or Facebook page for complete information. Please remember that all activities require **PREREGISTRATION**, and capacity is limited. If you wish to participate, please call the center at **256-772-6242** no later than Wednesday prior to the activity. Capacity for this class is limited to 12 participants.

LUNCH & LEARN:

Join us on Wednesdays from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm for our health education seminars, Lunch & Learn. Partnerships with local professionals provide you with health and wellness tips. Our October topics include:

- Martinson & Beason: Estate Planning, October 6
- Breast Cancer Awareness, October 13
- Caption Call, October 20
- COVID Awareness, October 27

If you would like to attend any or all of these tremendously informative sessions, remember that **PREREGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. While no lunch is provided, a limited number of picnic lunches will be available ONLY with preregistration one week prior to event.**

MINDFUL MEDITATION:

With all the bad news on the television, pandemic misinformation left and right, and the ups-and-downs of daily life, you may be feeling a little stressed. If so, come to Mindful Meditation on Thursdays, 1:15pm to 1:45pm. Since this peaceful session will allow you to distress and relax, remember to **PREREGISTER** if you wish to participate.

MEDICARE INFORMATION with AETNA

With Medicare open enrollment now in full force, you might be wondering if your current plan best meets your needs. Is there a better plan, something that saves you money and/or provides more benefits? Then be sure to check out the weekly sessions on Fridays, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm with Sabrina Houston and Lauri King, Medicare specialists from AETNA. Additional presentations will be on October 22 and December 3 will be 10:00 am to 11:00 am. **MAKE SURE TO PREREGISTER.**

OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY MOBILE MARKET

Are you looking for some fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables? Then you will definitely want to come out and shop Oakwood University's Mobile Market. Their bus will be in front of the center filled with an awesome selection of produce on October 13, October 27, November 11, and December 12 from 11:00 am to 12:15 pm. To assist the University in preparing for the number of participants, **PREREGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.**

SIT & SEW:

Are you an experienced with sewing and want to spend some quality time with others who share your love? If so, check out our Sit & Sew group. This creative group meets weekly to work on a variety of self-selected, individual sewing projects. **PLEASE NOTE:** Basic sewing skills are required for this group, as no instruction is provided. You must furnish your own supplies. This group meets Monday from 11:45 am to 2:45 pm. To participate, **YOU MUST PREREGISTER.**

THREADS:

Do you enjoy working with fibers and fabric? Then bring your own hand stitching or needlework project to the center for a bit of relaxation as you work on self-selected handwork items.

Participants share ideas and patterns for projects at this gathering, as well as provide support and advice. The group meets Friday from 9:15 am to 12:15 pm. To participate, please remember **TO PREREGISTER.**

HYPERLINKS IN NEWSLETTER:

For those new to receiving our newsletters as emails, you can open the hyperlinks. Since we send our newsletter as a PDF file, you may open the links by using the following instructions:

- Place the cursor on the link you wish to open
- A dialog box will open with the following caution warning: "This document is trying to connect to 'the link name.' If you trust this site, choose ALLOW. If you do not trust this site, choose BLOCK."
- By selecting ALLOW, the link will open.

CHA, CHA, CHA, CHANGES...

As we look towards the future, and ways to provide better service to all actively aging clients, we continue implementing improvements. Remember that hard copies of the newsletter, activities calendar, and activities descriptions are only available on the center's website and/or via email delivery. If you have not given us your email address, please contact the center to update your information.

The newsletter is also going through a major transformation. We are moving from a monthly issue to a quarterly issue. Therefore, newsletters will be emailed and placed on the website in the months of January, April, July, and October. Since updates to our Facebook page and website are in real-time, they are much more current than a printed newsletter. Even though our communication will be different, we will still provide informative tips in the newsletter to help our actively aging clients enjoy a healthier, more enjoyable active lifestyle.

Our daily activity programming format is one in which every activity has a set date and time. Participation in any activity requires **PREREGISTRATION**. The center now utilizes the **MySeniorCenter** software and kiosk for sign-in, which requires a bar-coded key tag. If you have not been to the center to complete the necessary paperwork and receive your membership card, please come by during our normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, for membership processing. This applies to all members, even longtime clients.

We continue to utilize the Voice Connect automated phone notification system for important happenings, schedule changes, closures due to holidays, and/or inclement weather, etc. The automated calls will display the center's main phone number **256-772-6242** on your Caller ID. If you prefer not receive the automated phone calls, please contact the center to unsubscribe

Join Us! Call the Center at
256-772-6242