



# WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

## HEART AWARENESS MONTH

February is designated as American Heart Month. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Some communities are disproportionately affected by this disease. We can do our part in protecting our hearts.

## HEART HEALTHY TIPS

- Move More
- Invite a colleague to walk or exercise with you
- Eat healthy foods
- Aim for a healthy weight
- Quit smoking
- Reduce stress and improve sleep
  - Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep per night
- Know your numbers
  - Track your blood pressure
  - Track your cholesterol numbers
  - Track blood sugar levels if you are diabetic
- Schedule regular checkups
- Substitute herbs for salt
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Make/eat healthy snacks

Sources: [NHLBI](#)

## HAPPY LOVE MONTH

February is the month of love and romance. This is the month that roses, chocolates, perfumes and more are purchased by many for their Valentine. If you happen not to be a Valentine or do not have a Valentine, don't worry, you are SPECIAL. Be your own Valentine and treat yourself! You deserve it.

“DARKNESS CANNOT  
DRIVE OUT DARKNESS,  
ONLY LIGHT CAN DO  
THAT. HATE CANNOT  
DRIVE OUT HATE, ONLY  
LOVE CAN DO THAT”

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



## MARDI GRAS MAMBO!

Mardi Gras originated in medieval Europe as a pagan celebration of spring. It became a Christian festival marking the start of Lent and the feasting period before Easter.

The name Mardi Gras comes from the French words "Mardi" (Tuesday) and "gras" (fat). We call it Fat Tuesday! Did you know that the first Mardi Gras in North America was not in New Orleans? It was in Mobile, Alabama in 1699. It is always celebrated 47 days before Easter.

The traditional colors of Mardi Gras are purple, green, and gold. The tradition of throwing beads and other trinkets from parade floats into crowds is believed to have started in the late 19th century. If you are going to celebrate Mardi Gras, be careful and stay alert. **(SOURCE: Google)**

## Featured Recipe

### Maque Choux

#### Ingredients:

- 1 medium green or red bell pepper
- 1/2 medium sweet onion
- 1 small jalapeño pepper
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 cups fresh or unthawed frozen corn kernels (from about 4 ears fresh, or 1 (12-ounce) bag frozen corn kernels)
- 3 slices bacon (about 3 ounces)
- 2 teaspoons Creole or Cajun seasoning, such as Tony Chachere's (or 1 teaspoon salt-free Creole or Cajun seasoning plus 1 teaspoon kosher salt)
- 1/2 cup heavy cream

#### Directions:

1. Prepare the following, adding each to the same large bowl as it is completed: Dice 1 medium green or red bell pepper (about 1 1/4 cups) and 1/2 medium sweet onion (about 1 cup). Halve and finely chop 1 small jalapeño pepper (remove the seeds and ribs first for a less spicy flavor before chopping if desired). Finely chop 2 garlic cloves.
2. If using fresh corn, remove the husks and cut the kernels from the cobs (about 2 cups) and place in a small bowl. Dice 3 bacon slices.
3. Place the bacon in a large cast iron or stainless steel skillet and cook over medium-high heat until crisp and the fat renders out, 5 to 6 minutes. Transfer the bacon with a slotted spoon to a paper towel-lined plate.
4. Pour off all but 2 tablespoons of the bacon fat. Add the onion mixture and 2 teaspoons Creole or Cajun seasoning (or 1 teaspoon salt-free Creole or Cajun seasoning plus 1 teaspoon kosher salt) to the bacon fat in the skillet and cook over medium heat until softened, 4 to 5 minutes.
5. Add the corn and cook until tender and warmed through, 1 to 2 minutes. Add 1/2 cup heavy cream and cook until warmed through, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Top with the crisped bacon and serve warm.



**Yields: 4 serving(s)**

**Prep Time: 10-20 mins**

**Cook Time: 15 mins**

**Total Time: 25-35 mins**