

## **KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH K-KIDS THROUGH A PANDEMIC**

*Nancy the Nutrition Nut of Oxford Kiwanis offers interactive lessons for healthy snacks via Zoom*

The Kiwanis Club of Oxford continues to serve the children of the community through alternative venues as the corona virus has impacted our daily lives. The club proudly supports service units in our three elementary schools, our middle school, our high school and Miami University. Each of these leadership clubs in turn is active in supporting their community. The virus prompted creative approaches to traditional interactions.

Nancy Parkinson, better known as Nancy the Nutrition Nut, is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, an active member of Oxford Kiwanis and an active member of OPC/ She is exceptionally well known for her work with all our service groups. She is a member of the faculty in Miami's department of Kinesiology and Health and has been a favorite with K-Kids and Builder's Club in school classrooms throughout the community. Nancy worked with school sponsors who, impressed by her past live programs, had asked her to provide a virtual program for a combined group of K-Kids members representing students from all three elementary schools. Sixty students signed up for the experience.

Planning began well in advance of the scheduled event. The focus of the session would be to provide the students with skills and knowledge for preparing their own healthy snacks as they finish a school day or during virtual learning from home. Nancy enlisted the assistance of several of her university nutrition students to research the nutritional values of the snacks to be generated, determine meeting logistics, and prepare handouts. She additionally enlisted her husband Scott to assist her in gathering ingredients and basic preparation utensils which were sorted into sixty+ preparation kits to be distributed to the participating students by the schools. Each kit contained a packet of four naan breads (a flat, leavened bread of northwest India), individual packets of marinara sauce, parmesan cheese-for mini naan pizzas, relish, mayonnaise, and one can of cooked white chicken-for chicken salad. Honey packets, sun-butter packets and a banana were also included for more naan bread toppings. Rounding out the kit were two bowls, two plates and one rubber spatula. Each kit cost approximately \$15.00 which was covered by grant funds.

Recipes were selected based on considerations for the age of participants, the ease of preparation for fourth and fifth graders, the nutritional value of the snacks, and equipment and refrigeration requirements. Care was also given to consider potential food allergies within the groups. Three different easy-to-make

recipes using Naan bread were selected. Procedures would involve health awareness, but also provide opportunities to exercise math skills.

On presentation day it was gratifying to see all sixty participating students appearing on the Zoom screen and notice that several students had invited their siblings to join the exercises. These students were already acquainted with Nancy the Nutrition Nut and enthusiasm was evident from the beginning. Several members of the Kiwanis Club also joined in and became an interclub.

The activity began immediately, and all students energetically participated. Nancy led them through the creation of naan with chicken/tuna salad, naan pizza and naan with honey, nut butter, and banana slices. Each student proudly displayed the results of their efforts and pledged their desire to seek out and consume healthy foods.

This approach proved highly successful in maintaining contact with our broad K family while being separated. The excitement for this event has prompted requests from our other family groups for repeat performances on a variety of topics.

Shared by Bill King