

Life Style Living

Spring 2019 Edition



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A Message From

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Thank you to all our association boards and homeowners for choosing FirstService Residential as the management company for your association. We have the leadership team and a wealth of resources available to provide unparalleled services in the industry. Our Lifestyle team consists of executives who are 100 percent offline from direct day-to-day management and serve as a resource to your on-site management team and community by providing input and best practices on topics such as amenity management and innovative programming. Our associates welcome your feedback to ensure we are providing consistent, attentive service to you, our valued client.



Community Living Tip

Community Crafting: Throw a Party With a Cause

Whether you hold your party at home or at your community's clubhouse, keeping it simple will keep you from feeling overwhelmed. An afternoon event can include cookies and punch or cheese and crackers, along with wine. For an evening party, you could combine your event with a potluck dinner.

Want to make your craft party extra special? Do it for a good cause! Make sure your invitations or announcements reference the cause and print out information about the organization you are supporting to pass out at your party.

Here are just a few craft party ideas with a purpose:

Greeting Card Making Party

To host a greeting card making party, you'll need pre-folded card stock and envelopes or blank postcards, decorations (such as magazine images, stickers and ribbons), drawing and writing utensils, scissors (including those that create decorative edging) and glue sticks. Depending on where you eventually plan to send the cards once complete, start your greeting with a generic opening, such as "Hello friend!" or "Hey there!" *Send Kids the World*, is an organization that collects postcards for children with life-threatening illnesses or injuries. Your group might consider sending their creations there!

Knitting and Crocheting Party

Have each attendee bring a skein of yarn and their own crochet or knitting needles. Provide a pattern or instructions, including the size each square needs to be. One organization, *KasCare*, which sponsors a *Knit-a-Square* program to create blankets for abandoned and orphaned children in southern Africa, gathers 8 inch by 8 inch afghan squares from thousands of people all over the world. Your group can even put together your own blanket from the squares you create and send it to *KasCare*.

Crafting for Homeless Pets Party

The *Anti-Cruelty Society* provides instructions for making a variety of pet items – all of which can be made from recycled materials! TV's "[The Dog Whisperer with Cesar Milan](#)" website offers up these recipes for healthy dog treats. Share them with the canine members of your home or donate them to your local community pet shelter.

Crafting with Kids

- **Stamped pillow cases.** White pillow cases, cut-out foam shapes and acrylic fabric paint are all you need for crafting these printed pillow cases. Once completed, your group might consider donating them to *Camp Dreamcatcher*, a summer camp for youth infected or affected by HIV/AIDS.
- **Cuddly creatures.** These adorable "creatures" are made with socks, quilt batting, felt and glue. Kids can individualize their creatures by attaching felt wings, facial features, arms and legs or any other personalized touches. *Enchanted Makeovers*, an organization that will give your item to children living in homeless shelters.
- **Woven bracelets.** Braid together strips of fabric to make soft bracelets for kids being treated for cancer and other serious diseases. Donate the bracelets to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital or another organization for children that might welcome these donations.

Crafting with your own two hands is rewarding in and of itself. Doing it with your friends and neighbors is even more fun and is a sure-fire way to escape. When the crafts you're creating are going to a worthy cause, you can feel especially good knowing you'll be spreading joy well beyond the boundaries of your community!



Balanced Living Tip

Check Out the Hottest Wellness Trends for 2019

With every new year comes a slew of articles about what will be hot in everything from fashion to food to home décor. The wellness world is no exception. We found a dozen lists of the trends to watch in 2019 and they had almost nothing in common. So, we picked our favorites! Read on for our selection of a few interesting wellness trends for the coming year.

Wellness Made Widely Available

Of all the changes in the wellness world, we think this may be the best one. Today, Walgreen's, CVS, Target and Walmart stock more and more natural products like Dr. Teal's and Gaia Herbs. They're also carrying more natural based cleaners like Mrs. Meyers, Method and Seventh Generation. Beauty products like Burt's Bees that were hard to find outside health food stores just a few years ago are also available in most retailers today.

Wearable Tech Jewelry

Love your FitBit or other fitness trackers' features but not the "fashion statement" it makes? Companies like Bellabeat Leaf (founded by an art and design graduate!) and Oura Ring are coming to the rescue with beautiful pieces that measure sleep, heart rate, stress, steps, calorie burn and temperature.

Ayurveda Ayurveda has been around more than 2,000 years! This alternative medicine tradition evolved in India and involves complex herbal blends and minerals combined with practicing yoga, good hygiene, exercise and meditation. One herb used in ayurvedic medicine is ashwaganda, an adaptogenic herb that helps the body cope with to emotions and stress. It's even being recommended by mainstream physicians to help with stress and mild anxiety.

CBD Oil There's a lot of confusion about CBD Oil, one of this year's hottest wellness trends. Thanks to the 2018 Farm Bill, CBD oil derived from Hemp is legal in all 50 states. CBD oil derived from cannabis, however, is not. It's only fully legal in the 10 states that have legalized cannabis for medicinal and recreational use. In either case, CBD oil contains only trace amounts of THC – it will not get people high or show up on a drug screening. A couple of studies have shown it to be beneficial for chronic inflammation and pain. Smoking cessation, opioid addiction, anxiety and insomnia are just a few other conditions it can be effective for.

Oat Milk

You may have seen the news about Brooklyn coffee shops that caused panic in their customers by running out of oat milk last year. "Oat milk? What the heck is that?" was a common response in every place but Brooklyn! To meet demand, the company has upped production 1,250% and built a new factory as well.

Devotees of oat milk say it doesn't have the nutty quality of almond or cashew milk. You can make your own oat milk at home if your Whole Foods is out of Oatly. Or, you can wait just a couple of months for the Quaker Oats' version. Quaker plans to release original, unsweetened original and vanilla, which will be distributed nationally soon. Besides being a non-dairy alternative to regular milk, oat milk contains small amounts of fiber and we know that's good for you.

There are so many other trends to explore this coming year, including high-tech recovery devices for post-workout soreness and home hormone testing kits. Watch for information on new trends in future issues of the Lifestyle Living newsletter as they emerge.

Recipe

So Much More Than Vanilla: Celebrate the Blondie!



Ingredients

- 1-1/2 cups packed brown sugar
- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten, room temperature
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips

Directions

In a large bowl, combine the brown sugar, butter, eggs and vanilla just until blended. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; add to brown sugar mixture. Stir in chocolate chips.

Spread into a greased 13×9-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 18-20 minutes. Cool on a wire rack. Cut into bars.

Low-Carb Chocolate Chip Peanut Butter Blondie

Ingredients

- 4.5 ounces unsalted butter, softened
- 4.5 ounces natural peanut butter, smooth
- 3 ounces (1/2 cup) Natvia
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 ounce (1/4 cup) coconut flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 3.5 ounces sugar-free chocolate chips

Directions

Preheat oven to 355°F. Place the softened butter and peanut butter in a mixing bowl. Using a hand mixer, beat on medium speed until smooth. Add Natvia and beat on medium speed until the mixture is pale and fluffy.

Add the chocolate chips and stir. Pour the mixture into a lined square cake tin. Place in the oven for 20 minutes, the blondie is baked when an inserted skewer comes out clean. The blondie will be very fluffy and will drop slightly when cooled. Allow to cool slightly before cutting into 16 pieces and enjoying.

Gluten-Free Blondies

Ingredients

- 2 cups packed brown sugar
- 2/3 cup butter, cut up
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons gluten-free vanilla
- 2 cups Gluten-Free Flour Mix (recipe below)
- 1 teaspoon gluten-free baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup butterscotch-flavor pieces or semisweet chocolate pieces

Gluten-Free Flour Mix

- 3 cups white rice flour
- 3 cups potato starch
- 2 cups sorghum flour
- 4 teaspoons xanthan gum

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 13×9-in baking pan; set aside. In a medium saucepan, stir brown sugar and butter over medium heat until butter is melted and mixture is smooth. Remove from heat; cool slightly. Add eggs, one at a time, beating with a wooden spoon just until combined. Stir in vanilla.

In a medium bowl stir together gluten-free flour mix, baking powder and baking soda. Add flour mixture to egg mixture, stirring just until combined. Stir in butterscotch pieces. Pour batter into the prepared baking pan, spreading evenly.

Bake for 15 to 18 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool slightly in pan on a wire rack. Cut into bars while warm.

Holiday Living Tip



Earth Day is an Annual Event Celebrated on April 22

Worldwide, various activities and events are held to help demonstrate support for environmental protection. Earth Day was first celebrated in 1970 in the United States. Today, events and activities take place in over 200 countries around the world. Earth Day serves to educate populations on sustainability, raise awareness about the impact of our actions on the environment and as a reminder that we need to take action now to protect it before it may be too late.

On a local level, communities managed by FirstService Residential are already planning events and activities to recognize Earth Day and celebrate and protect the natural environment. From eco-friendly crafts and games to community-wide green initiatives and large-scale events, both management and homeowners are embracing the opportunity to be involved. If your community might be looking for ways to observe Earth Day and protect our planet for future generations, here are some “go green” ideas you might consider planning. To learn more about Earth Day, and to access other resources that can help you plan, market and execute events and activities that show some love for this amazing planet we call home, you can also access the website for the national Earth Day organization at www.earthday.org.

Community-Wide Picnic:

Encourage your neighbors to simply take some breathers of fresh air and spend some time enjoying activities in the great outdoors. Although there's numerous opportunities to do this, planning a community-wide picnic in the park, combined with a few nature-oriented activities (i.e.: nature scavenger hunt, nature hike, nature crafts, etc.) can be a fun way to recognize Earth Day while integrating both social and environmental components of programming.

Community Clean-Up & Recycling Initiatives:

Harness the collective efforts of your community to support land or ocean conservation. Have interested volunteers assemble as a group to help collect trash that may be littering their community, along a local roadway system, coastline or other natural area in the region. To add a social element to the cause, arrange a continental breakfast or lunch for volunteers on the day the clean-up takes place. Be sure to recycle appropriate items to further maximize the conservation impact!

Environmental Education Program:

Plan a lecture program that helps educate your neighbors about the natural environment and/or the impact of our carbon footprint on the world. A local naturalist, park ranger or environmental education specialist from a local college or university might be recruited to present.

Show an eco-themed movie or documentary:

Ready the organic popcorn and invite your homeowners to attend a showing of a sobering documentary or a family-friendly eco flick. Classics like Al Gore's “An Inconvenient Truth”, “Lunch Line” or “Waiting For Superman” are a few options oriented toward adult audiences. Films more suitable for younger children and families include “Wall-E”, “Happy Feet” or “Over the Hedge.” Films such as these can help teach children and adults about the important influence of Mother Nature and how to reduce the negative impact of our carbon footprint on our environment.

Community Bike Ride:

Encourage your neighbors to ditch their car for the day and walk or ride a bike to and from the community center or other locations where they need to be. To further promote the cause, organize a community-wide ride along a safe route, inclusive of a stop for a group lunch. Bike riding helps reduce the carbon footprint, but it's also great for the body and soul. Fewer cars on the road means less gases in the air that can contribute to global warming.

Host A Farmer's Market:

Hosting a Farmer's Market can be an ideal way to bring some of the freshest local produce and other natural goods to your community. Natural product supermarkets and retailers, local farmers, florists, bakeries, etc. might be invited to participate. Fresh fruits and vegetables, jams, jellies, pickles, flowers, cheese, fresh breads, etc. might be sold. Besides supporting area businesses, buying locally helps to minimize the distance products must be transported to various retailers while reducing consumption of fossil fuels and carbon emissions.

Community-Wide Nature Hike, Walk Or Run:

Challenge your neighbors to a run or walk in honor of Earth Day. It's the perfect way to get out and enjoy the great outdoors, socialize with others and get a little exercise along the way. Whether around the block, through the community or along a nature trail, just encourage everyone to enjoy and appreciate both the people and environment around them. If you can find a neighbor who's passionate about environmental features unique to your area, invite them to come along to share their knowledge on the route.

Tree Planting & Beautification:

In recognition of the conservation impact of planting trees, host a ceremonial tree planting in a community park, other common area or neighborhood that might benefit from a helping green thumb. Make it an occasion to discuss conservation stewardship. Encourage neighborhood organizations to also hold block parties and get members to adopt and care for street trees in front of their homes.

Host A Swap Party With An Eco-Friendly Theme:

What better way to get rid of your old stuff than to give it to friends who will put it to good use? With that in mind, invite your neighbors to a good old fashioned swap party where everybody brings a bag or two of unwanted stuff (clothes, toys, electronics, etc.) and then goes home with a bag or two of different items they can use in exchange. Beverages and eco-friendly snacks such as homemade trail mix with raisins, sunflower seeds, peanuts, almonds and chocolate chips or other items made from locally sourced ingredients might also be served.

Children's Activities:

Looking for ways to get children and/or grandchildren involved in activities for Earth Day? Here's just a few ideas specifically oriented toward youths:

- **Trash to Treasure Crafts:** Have the kids in your community bring in a variety of recyclable items such as milk cartons, toilet paper and paper towel rolls, egg cartons and more. Challenge their creativity to come up with new inventions and art projects with the materials.
- **Plant a Garden:** Invite kids to plant a garden in a designated community area. Ask each of them to bring a shovel along or equip them with a metal or plastic one made especially for kids. Provide some seeds for growing fruits and vegetables. Before they hit the dirt, provide a little education about the process and beauty of growing your own food and how nature supports those efforts.
- **Green Game:** Here's a great way to spark creativity and healthy competition: Give each child an item that would have ended up in the trash, such as an empty egg carton, container or bottle—cleaned, of course. Next, discuss the importance of reusing things and challenge each child to come up with a creative way to reuse the items they've been given. They can even go online for ideas and inspiration. Afterwards, discuss the ideas, choose a winner and reward everyone with a special Earth Day prize, such as a plant for their room or a trip to the local farmers' market.
- **Nature Walk & Craft Collage:** Assemble the youths of your neighborhood and take them on a nature walk. Have each of them collect a wide variety of items found in the natural outdoor environment such as pine cones, sticks, leaves and flower petals as they go. After the hike, equip them with construction paper, glue and other basic supplies they can use to transform the items they've collected into a beautiful art collage. Check the Internet for a wide variety of other ideas for nature crafts, such as homemade bird feeders, Earth Day Posters, etc.
- **Nature Scavenger Hunt:** Plan a scavenger hunt for the kids of your community with an outdoor nature theme. Participants might be equipped with a visual guide to help them find and identify different species of plants, trees and flowers as they go. Plastic magnifying glasses might also be provided to make them feel like nature detectives.

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Community Spotlight



Silo Point Condominium Baltimore, MD

Silo Point Condominium is a unique building that started as a grain silo in 1923. It is now an award winning, 24-story tower with incredible views of the Baltimore Harbor and the city skyline.

It is not just the building that is unique, but the location allows for events that imitate the unique atmosphere of the building. Here are just a few events Silo Point has brought to their residents.

IHeartRadio Concerts

Silo Point Condominium was able to host an exclusive IHeartRadio concert in the lobby of their building. The concert hosted George Ezre, a Top 40 artist, who played a small show for his fans. Silo Point was able to do a raffle with their residents for front row access while other residents were able to enjoy the music from the lobby.

Wine Down Wednesday

With efforts to keep the residents engaged, Silo Point does a Wine Down Wednesday event that allows residents to meet their fellow neighbors while having a glass of wine. Local wineries are welcome to come and display their wines for the residents.

Craft Beer Events

While Wine Down Wednesdays are a huge hit among the residents, Silo Point also caters to the craft beer lovers. Local brewery's host a tasting of their very best craft beers. These type of events encourage residents to engage with others in the building.

From wine to music, Silo Point has taken a modern and welcome approach bringing residents together to enjoy activities and opportunities to connect with others that share some similar interests.

