

February - March 2010

MOMS 2 MOMS

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Recipes

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A Fresh Take on Taters Chili a Top Choice for Many

One of the things many cooks love is experimenting with a favorite food or recipe. Whether you're experimenting for a dinner party or dinner for the family, the following take on mashed potatoes is sure to add new life to an old favorite.

Mexican Mash - Serves 4 to 6

2 poblano chiles, or 1 Anaheim plus 1 green pepper
3 pounds potatoes, any type
10 cooked tomatillos, or several tablespoons very mild green salsa
5 garlic cloves, chopped
5 to 6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 teaspoon cumin seeds, or more
2 to 4 tablespoons sour cream (low-fat is fine)
3 to 4 tablespoons chopped cilantro
Black pepper
Lime juice
Sugar and salt

1. Roast the chiles over an open flame until the skin chars; place in a plastic or paper bag or bowl, and cover or seal well. Leave to sweat for at least 30 minutes, then peel the skin off. Remove the stem and seeds and coarsely chop. Set aside.
2. Rinse the potatoes to wash off the dirt, then cut into chunks and peel if you like. If you like the flavor of the skin but not the texture, cook the potatoes whole or in halves, then remove the skin when cooked.
3. Add the water to cover, then a pinch of sugar and salt. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to medium-high, and cook until the potatoes are just tender.
4. Drain. Place the potatoes back on the stove, over medium heat, shaking every so often for a few minutes to dry them out.
5. Mash the potatoes coarsely with a masher or strong fork. When they are chunkily mashed, add the cooked tomatillos (if using), garlic, olive oil, reserved roasted chiles, cumin seeds, sour cream, lime juice to taste, and cilantro. Season to taste with salt and pepper.



Few foods boast recipes as varied as chili. Depending on where you live or grew up, chili can take on many different forms and functions. To some, a thick chili is the perfect entree, particularly when the weather outside is frightful. To others, however, a thin chili can be the ideal appetizer.

As varied as the recipes for chili can be, the chefs often mirror that variety. For instance, the following recipe for "Spicy Chili" from "The Niman Ranch Cookbook" (Ten Speed Press) comes courtesy of Wired magazine's Phil Ferrato, who cooked the chili for his staff, many of whom found it among their favorite foods.

Spicy Chili - Serves 4 to 6

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large white onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
2 pounds lean beef (flat bottom round, eye of round, heel meat, sirloin tip, or top round), coarsely minced
1 tablespoon kosher salt
1 tablespoon ancho chile powder
1 tablespoon dried oregano
2 teaspoons dried thyme
2 teaspoons cumin seeds, toasted in dry pan or on stove top
1 teaspoon ground coriander
3 cups strained tomatoes
2 cups drained cooked kidney or pinto beans (optional)

Heat the olive oil in a large, heavy-bottomed stockpot over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring, for 2 to 3 minutes, until soft. Add the meat and cook, stirring, for 2 to 3 minutes, until browned. Stir in the salt, chile powder, oregano, thyme, cumin seeds, and coriander. Add the tomatoes and beans and bring to a boil. Decrease the heat to low and cook uncovered for 20 minutes, or until the beef has absorbed the flavors of the spices. Serve.



Guilty Pleasures ... Peanut Butter & Chocolate Cheesecake Cups

Few foods elicit the emotions of cheesecake. A favorite dessert on menus across the country, cheesecake is even more delectable when combined with peanut butter and chocolate, such as in the following recipe for "Peanut Butter and Chocolate Cheesecake Cups"

Makes 24 Cups

Crust - 2 cups chocolate wafer crumbs (about 36 cookies)
1/4 cup SLENDA Sweetener, Granulated
5 tablespoons light butter, melted

Peanut Butter Filling:

1/2 cup SLENDA
3 tablespoons reduced-fat peanut butter
3 tablespoons reduced-fat cream cheese, softened

Chocolate Cheesecake Filling

4 ounces unsweetened chocolate, finely chopped

1 8-ounce package reduced-fat cream cheese, softened
1 3/4 cups SLENDA, Granulated
1/2 cup nonfat milk
1/2 cup liquid egg substitute
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 350 F. Place 24 mini-muffin foil baking cups on a baking sheet.
2. To make the crust, mix the cookie crumbs, SLENDA and melted butter in a medium bowl until the crumbs are evenly moistened.
3. To make the peanut butter filling, mash the SLENDA, peanut butter and cream cheese in a small bowl with a rubber spatula until blended.
4. To make the chocolate cheesecake filling, melt the chocolate in a small stainless steel

or glass heatproof bowl over (but not touching) a small saucepan of simmering water until the chocolate is melted. Remove the bowl from the saucepan and cool the chocolate until lukewarm.

5. Beat the cream cheese in a medium bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed until creamy, scraping down the sides of the bowl. Gradually add the SLENDA and beat until smooth, scraping down the sides of the bowl. Gradually beat in the milk. On low speed, beat in the melted and cooled chocolate, then the egg substitute and vanilla, mixing until well blended, again scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed.
6. Divide the crumb mixture evenly among the cups and firmly press the crumbs into the bottom of each cup. Spoon an equal amount (about 1/2 teaspoon) of the peanut butter filling into each cup.



Divide the cheesecake filling among the cups.

7. Bake until the filling feels just set when pressed lightly, about 12 minutes.
8. Let cool completely on the baking sheet. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until chilled, at least 2 hours. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

Women's Guide to Younger Looking Skin

There are many natural components of aging and wrinkles are no exception. As we age the skin becomes less elastic, thinner and drier. The skin is also less able to protect itself from damage. As a result, wrinkles and fine lines can begin forming.

Some women experience deep wrinkles, while others have less visible lines. Genetics can play a major role in determining the wrinkling factor of the skin. Take a look at your mother's or grandmother's skin. If they weren't prone to spending long hours in the sun and refrained from smoking cigarettes (sun exposure and smoking can contribute to wrinkling), chances are your skin will be somewhat similar as you age.

Because many times people are judged first by outward appearances, women can become self-conscious of their wrinkles as they get into their 40s and 50s. Today, a number of procedures aimed at reducing the appearance of wrinkles and fine lines exist. The key is finding one that works for you and your budget. Here are some options to consider.

* **Gain a little weight:** No one is advocating going on an eating binge. However, a new study published in the journal *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery* analyzed pictures of the faces of 186 pairs of identical twins, along with extensive questionnaires each twin filled out about lifestyle and skin care. The study found that for twin pairs under 40, the heavier one (a four-point difference in the Body Mass Index, or BMI) looked significantly older. But surprisingly, after 40, that same four-point difference in BMI made the heavier twin look significantly younger. Once you reach 40, it may pay to increase your weight by a few pounds, which can fill out your face and reduce the appearance of wrinkling.

* **Explore wrinkle creams:** Wrinkle creams are found in department stores and drug stores across the country. Most promise dramatic results. It is unlikely that you'll get the same results from creams and lotions as you would from going under the knife. But depending upon the ingredients in the products, you could see improvements in the skin over time. Most ingredients are antioxidants that help reverse cell damage caused by free radicals. Fruit acids are another popular ingredient, which exfoliate the skin to reveal newer skin underneath.

* **Skin resurfacing:** There are a number of treatments that "damage" the outer layer of the skin to promote newer, younger skin to grow in its place. Chemical peels, dermabrasion, or laser resurfacing are just some of these techniques. According to the Mayo Clinic, laser resurfacing is an effective treatment for minor facial flaws. It can wipe out fine to moderate wrinkles, liver or age spots, correct uneven skin tones, and even reduce the appearance of acne or chickenpox scars. Because the epidermis, or outer layer of skin, is removed, it's common to experience some irritation, redness or itching on areas treated. It could take up to two weeks before new skin forms and you can remove bandages.

* **Medicinal botulinum toxin type A:** This is the same bacteria that causes food poisoning, marketed under the popular name Botox(R). However, in the medicinal version, a much lower concentration is purified and injected into muscles to prevent contraction. When muscles aren't contracted, the skin on top of them flattens and appears less wrinkled. These types of injections are not good for all types of facial wrinkles and cannot reverse the ones caused by sun damage. It is also discouraged to use Botox around the mouth because these muscles are needed for eating and talking.

* **Injection fillers:** Collagen fillers and other products are injected under the skin to smooth out wrinkles. They can be effective when done correctly. However, in certain cases the injection can appear uneven or bumpy.

* **Surgery:** Surgery is one of the most expensive options for treating wrinkles. Face and eye lifts can pull the skin taut and smooth out wrinkles.

Cervical Cancer Screening

Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer among women. In the United States alone, it is estimated there were 11,270 new cases of cervical cancer in 2009 and 4,070 deaths from the disease. The two groups of women with the highest rates of cervical cancer are those from ages 35 to 39 and those from ages 60 to 64. Early detection is the key to treatment and survival.

Understanding HPV

Cervical cancer is a cancer of the cervix, or the organ that connects the uterus to the vagina. It is almost always caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), which up until recently was a little-known virus. It has since become a household name. This is a sexually transmitted virus that affects the mucous membranes in humans. HPV is spread through sexual skin-to-skin contact. Penetration is not necessary to spread the virus. Men and women can be affected by HPV, and there are different strains. HPV that causes genital warts won't necessarily contribute to cervical cancer.



PAP Tests

The only way to prevent HPV is to abstain from sexual contact. In recent years a vaccine has been approved for the prevention of HPV. Early detection of cervical cancer is also essential. This is obtained through a PAP test. The incidence of cervical cancer has decreased in developed countries around the world because of an increase in the use of screenings and appropriate follow-up treatment. The PAP test or PAP smear is named after Dr. George Papanicolaou who first developed the test. A sample of cervical cells are taken and observed under a microscope.

A woman can have HPV for years and not know it. It stays in the body and can lead to cervical cancer years after infection. There are often no symptoms of HPV or cervical cancer, therefore PAPs are the single best way to detect it. If there are any symptoms, they may include unexplained bleeding or pain.

Treatment

If cervical cancer is caught early, it can usually be treated successfully. A woman may still be able to have children even after the cancer is caught early enough. However, most treatments for cervical cancer make a woman unable to have children afterward. Depending on the stage of cancer treatments may include:

- * Cone biopsy to remove the cancer
- * Simple hysterectomy to remove the uterus and cervix
- * Hysterectomy and removal of pelvic lymph nodes with or without removal of both ovaries and fallopian tubes
- * Radiation therapy, using high-dose X-rays or implants in the vaginal cavity to kill cancer cells
- * Chemotherapy

Regular pelvic examinations and PAP tests can save a woman's life and prevent cervical cancer from developing. Women with any unusual symptoms should not hesitate to speak with their doctor.

Health

Surviving the Recession as a Single Mother

The recession is taking its toll on millions of Americans each day. One unique sector affected by the economy is single mothers whose careers are necessary on many levels. When these women suffer the impersonal blow of job termination, their core foundation is hit profoundly. How do they survive so to best support their family emotionally and financially. They do what women do best ... pick themselves up, dust themselves off and start all over again!

Leslie Padilla, former public relations executive for Comcast Programming, and single mother of two, has channeled her recent personal and professional challenges to find tactical and inspirational ways to face the recession while advancing her career and nurturing her family.



"Having worked since the age of 13, being laid-off was perhaps the most humbling experience of my life," confessed Padilla. "I had always identified myself with my career and now I found myself in an unexpected role of divorced, single mother. For weeks I was paralyzed by this reality. But through writing and healing I found my inner voice and began networking at rapid-fire pace to build my foundation for our future."

Padilla is just one of millions of women around the world facing similar setbacks during the recession. Through her own journey she aspires to give hope and tips to her fellow sisters so they too may find their silver lining during this passing storm.

1) Allow yourself time to heal: Losing a job requires mourning. Alert family members and friends that you need their support during this time of loss. And recognize that immediately after being severed is not the best time to interview as you will not reflect your innate confidence and knowledge to further your career.

2) Visit the doctors: Schedule all of your family's preventative doctor appointments and get your prescriptions filled prior to losing your health insurance benefits. Work with your doctors so medications can be prescribed in a quantity to last a few months.

3) Continue working: Remain connected with colleagues and industry members by offering to do pro-bono or charitable work during your severance time. It will add to your resume and make you feel good simultaneously. These "free" services also allow you to demonstrate your strengths so you can potentially begin to work freelance and then land a full-time job with your clients once the recession resides.

4) Utilize ALL severance offerings: Many companies these days include corporate counseling in their termination packages. Use these services to redesign your resume. Research the possibility of utilizing company or agency offices from where you can job search productively and at no cost by using their computers, Internet, printers, scanner, resume paper, and business card production. Plus, these environments are great for networking with other individuals in similar career transition who can help with both emotional support and potential job leads.

5) Leverage your industry resources: Meet with the president of your industry trade organization's local chapter so they know you in-person and your individual qualifications and goals. These contacts can be invaluable and serve as true ambassadors in recommending you to companies they know have openings.

6) Network: Arrange in-person meetings with everyone you know -- you never know who may have a contact worth leveraging. Offer to meet them for coffee or a drink, and always pay the bill as they are doing you a favor. Try to avoid lunches and dinners as they can get expensive quickly and chip away at the severance payments you need to manage wisely.

7) Create a Budget: Be prepared for the long-haul should you not be able to land a job prior to your severance running out. Cut back immediately on all unnecessary expenses like dining out, clothing, beauty services, and coffee shops. And make a budget line for networking expenses as these add up, but are tax deductible.

8) Remain Optimistic: Use the term "in transition" as opposed to unemployed, laid-off and collecting unemployment. You have paid into the benefits you are receiving and you are entitled to what your employer and government is offering.

9) Don't Settle: Remember you are valuable; do not take a job in which you have no interest or if it does not pay what you are worth. Be patient and focused on what you want and work for that position.

10) Nurture your nature: Through all of this, make sure to find time for yourself. This is a process and to remain strong tap into personal passions that soothe your soul -- whether it's a bubble bath, journaling or just taking a walk and breathing slowly. These small gifts will pamper your nature allowing you to be a better mother and woman in all realms of life.

Padilla continues her journey each and every day gathering new and helpful ways for surviving the recession. For more suggestions visit Leslie's Voice blog at <http://lesliepadilla.wordpress.com> or visit www.lesliepadilla.com.

Easily Eliminate 100 Calories a Day

DiETING doesn't have to mean giving up everything that you love. A few simple changes here and there can trim a few calories from your daily intake -- and that can mean faster weight loss. Following one or more of these suggestions in



the food and beverage choices made at home, work, school, or on the go can help cut about 100 calories each day. While 100 calories may not seem like a big thing, over the course of one year you will have saved yourself 36,500 calories in total.

Instead of:

- potato chips
- 12-ounce regular soda
- 6 oz. fruit-on-the-bottom yogurt
- a bagel
- butter and margarine on pans
- white bread
- traditional pizza
- whole milk
- Super sized meat portions
- layer cake

Try

- baked potato chips
- 12-ounce water
- light yogurt with no-calorie sweetener
- 2 pieces whole-grain toast
- non-stick cooking spray
- light, whole-wheat bread
- halve the cheese and add veggies
- nonfat or 1% milk
- 3-ounce portions (deck of cards size)
- angel food cake

Moms2Moms publication is updated each month on topics that are important to moms, children and families.

Looking for information on a specific topic?

Email: communitynews123@comcast.net

or call 570-674-7772 and let us know what topics you are interested in reading about.

Your feedback and suggestions are important, let us know what you think and we'll do our best to serve you.

Lisa Pretko, Owner / Publisher

Resources

Local library offer many resources for families

By: MB Gilligan
Moms2Moms
Correspondent

This month's resource section of Moms2Moms will be used to describe, detail, and highlight people, places and resources in the Back Mountain community that have been helpful to local mothers. After some careful thought, and a bit of research, I was amazed when I listed all of the ways that the Back Mountain Memorial Library has helped us in raising our three children while staying within a reasonable budget. I am sure other libraries throughout the Wyoming Valley, offer some of the same services, that can be just as helpful to your family. Of course, there are the free Story Hour programs for toddlers, including the new "Mother Goose on the Loose" program for two to three-year-olds that promote early literacy and how to keep a musical beat, and the three to five-year-olds' story hours with reading, finger play, songs, and small crafts. Added to that is a Parent / Child Workshop for one to three-year-olds and their mothers. This play-group setting brings in outside specialist resources like a speech pathologist and a nutritionist to interact with the mothers and their children.

"The library is a great social outlet for the mothers, also. They need to get out and be with other mothers, too," said Janet Bauman, the Children's Librarian. "We have so many people who have met here and are still close friends years later."

Mrs. Bauman also encourages mothers to set up their own groups to come and use the Children's Room. "They can meet here and use our rocking chairs or sit on our beautiful rug and read with their children," she said. There are also four computers available loaded

with educational games, books on cassette, new DVD's, older videos, picture books, and board games available in the Children's Library.

My own children received their first library cards as part of a library tour with their nursery school classes and those tours are still available for nursery schools, day care centers, Cub Scouts and Girls Scouts. "I ask if they have a library care," said Mrs. Bauman. "For those who don't, I tell them their homework assignment is to see me later to get their library card."

The Back Mountain Memorial Library has a lot to offer mothers by way of child-rearing books, too. I started with books of baby names and pre-natal care, and worked my way through nutrition, cookbooks for children, and a great series of books entitled Your Two Year Old, Your Three Year Old, up to Your Teenager that helped me realize that all children are different and that, that is ok.

I found that for a family on a budget, the library provided all the reading my family needed at little or no cost. We did splurge once in a while to buy books from the Children's Shelf, the Used Bookstore, or at the auction, but for a family of readers our costs were minimal.

It was a great help that books needed for book reports on non-fiction and biographies were always readily available. In addition, most local schools participate in the Accelerated Reader program, and the library can save you the cost of buying books for that also.

"We have a lot of non-fiction



from picture books that the youngsters love to look through, to the young reader non-fiction for book reports and we have so many biographies available that most children don't have any problem finding one that interests them," said Mrs. Bauman.

"We also have a very large collection of Accelerated Reader

books, maybe not all of them, but quite a lot."

The Back Mountain Memorial Library can help teens and 'tweens with more than just book reports and accelerated reader points, though. "If kids have to do a group project for school, they can come here and use our tables," said Mrs. Bauman. Also for that age group, the newest program is a free Gaming Day featuring WI games, Rock Band and Guitar Hero. Board games will also be available.

The annual summer reading program, in addition to the highly popular children's section, also includes a Donuts and Discussion book club for nine to eleven-year-olds and a Young Adult Book Discussion Group for 12 to 18-year-olds.

More than the reading programs, though, the library offers many opportunities for volunteer work, a wonderful character-builder for young adults. Many of our area teenagers have found great pleasure in working at the Library Auction or in expressing their dramatic flair at the Haunted Library. In addition, the library is a great place to turn when your high school student is trying to find that worthwhile completion project or Eagle

Scout project. "We've had students put together and run a Story Hour or a Book Buddies program for their completion project," said Mrs. Bauman. "They were very good and the younger children love being with the older kids."

Over the years, local high school students have organized rooms at the Haunted Library or booths for the auction for completion projects. The students enjoy a great sense of fulfillment, the community benefits from any help the library receives, and mothers benefit from watching their child's success with these special projects.

This list of ways the Back Mountain Memorial Library can help area mothers is still not complete, though. The library also offers American Red Cross Babysitting Courses to help prepare your child for a first job. They also support the preschool program called One Book PA in which each child receives a free book, sponsored by Walmart. These books are handed out at story hours, tours, other special library programs, and, if still available, to any child who asks for one. In addition, the library sponsors an annual Reading Fun with the Penguins program with Scott Stuccio, Tux, and a member of the Penguins hockey team. Plus, there is a strong community outreach program where a member of the library staff goes out to schools to do story hours or special programs. This year the fifth graders at Wycallis Elementary worked on a Heritage Quilt with the librarian. The quilt commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Wachovia Arena will be on display at the Arena.

So, whether it is for relaxing reading material, social interaction, research, community spirit, or child development, I hope you will take the opportunity to really make the most of all that the Back Mountain Memorial Library has to offer. For information or registration for any of these programs, just call the library at 675-1182.

Visit the Luzerne County Library system online at www.luzerneco.lib.pa.us/memberlibraries to research or visit a library close to you. Their motto ... "Providing the adults and children of Luzerne County with the information and resources that support lifelong learning and lifelong enjoyment."

Feature

Mom recommends exercise to increase energy level

Liz Martin
Moms2Moms

Amy Huntington is THAT mom — the one you see at school with a passel of kids in tow, and who clearly has it all together. She is the stereotypical ‘super mom’ who manages motherhood, a career and volunteerism with grace and finesse. In the aftermath of learning more about her, it is realized that Amy’s ability to be a great mom is part of an evolution, the result of her own personal journey—one she continues to experience on a daily basis.

Motherhood

“Life truly seems ‘easy’ now, as was certainly not the case during the days, way back when, when I could describe my life as having three boys under age 3, changing diapers for three around-the-clock..., or when the boys were ages 5, 4, 3 and I had a newborn baby girl who was transported by helicopter, and then lived an hour away at Lehigh Valley Hospital for her first four weeks of life!,” she explained.

As Amy recalled, she would drop the boys off at Gate of Heaven—1st Grade, Pre-K4, and Pre-K3—pray as she “buzzed” down the Turnpike, and then “try to feed, bond, and just love her [the baby] as much as I could in one hour, cry all the way home, arrive back just in time to pick up the two half-day preschoolers, do lunch, naps or just enjoy their company until 2:30 p.m. when my oldest son got off the bus, manage the chaos of the three boys until after suppertime, hand them off to my husband and many nights go back to LVH, return home to collapse at 10-11:00 p.m. I made so many trips the PA Turnpike toll officers at Wilkes-Barre and Allentown became my best friends!”

Comparably, Amy finds life a little easier today, but she continues to define her role as mom to four youngsters as being a ‘master juggler’. As her children are now in school full time, this young mother now has time to dedicate to other things, including one glorious hour of “quiet, coffee and newspaper” before work.

“But, sometimes the phone rings—missing snack, permission slip, money, gym clothes, musical instrument



—then I am moving like lightning to deliver the goods before heading out to a 9 a.m. class,” she added.

Career

Amy teaches group cardio classes and SilverSneakers at Shapes; and senior strength/chair fitness at The Village at Greenbriar, both in Dallas. For four hours per day, four days per week, the master juggler transforms into fitness guru.

“I love, love, love my job and it often feels like the only thing keeping me sane,” Amy noted.

Her first class of the day is usually a high-energy cardio class, of which she aims to make it “a full-hour sweat-fest for everyone walking in the door”. The second hour is seniors, doing more strength / flexibility / balance exercises. “It is a much more social hour and I look forward to the interactivity. We sing, we dance, we laugh, we tell stories--and every time I come away inspired, having learned something important.”

“It’s like attending a college class—you walk into a Meteorology class fascinated by what the professor will teach you that day, something you formerly just wondered about when looking up into the sky. When I walk into my class at Greenbriar, I have these wise professors of REAL LIFE all seated in front of me.

I am always learning life lessons from the stories of their neighbors, kids, grand-kids, and I am always fascinated by their perspectives. And I love how they can magically dissolve my greatest worries and remind me of how little these stresses really matter to the big picture in life. It’s

like I have my own weekly visit with Oprah, but even better. They have taught me to never sweat the small stuff—isn’t there a book about that?”

After work and a shower, Amy tends to matters of the household, such as laundry, cleaning, grocery shopping, and bill paying. But, as is typically the case,

one of her many volunteer projects is in need of her time. In her free time, Amy is the webmaster for the Gate of Heaven School website, she helps with various PTG committees for fundraising and promotional events, and organizes the Gate of Heaven Cub Scout Pack.

“I guess it’s easier to tell you what I do NOT try to accomplish in a day. I do not strive for clean, organized, groomed, or completed anything. If I have to achieve any of those descriptions, it is over the course of many days, and even then, the jobs don’t always get done. For instance, birthday parties never happen—the three times rescheduled impromptu tween pizza party becomes a promise for a sleepover party next year; and Halloween costumes do NOT get bought—the kids find something out of the box from last year or make something quick on their own to march in the school parade the next day. So honestly, on a daily basis, I only strive to end the day with a smile. Seems simple, but it means that I successfully managed to feed four kids an after-school snack, plan out some kind of supper, time it with the nightly activities, get three going on their homework, keep the kindergartener entertained / out of their way, assemble whatever is needed for sports practices, piano lesson, scout meeting, etc., and got in the car and out on time. I am a multi-tasking addict, always trying to accomplish more than what the time allows, cramming in the next load of laundry, sorting mail, sending an email before leaving the house when I should be in the car and on my

way to wherever. I am successful only about one out of five weeknights. I’m shooting for two of five as my 2010 New Years Resolution.”

Marriage

As Amy will attest, her husband, Dr. Richard Huntington, is a “busy working professional who comes home to the role of husband and dad.” Richard is a family practice physician with Geisinger Health System, in Wilkes-Barre. Besides managing and treating patients, he oversees the Geisinger Kistler Clinic and is also a physician supervisor for Geisinger’s new physician assistant-run Careworks Clinics.

“I think having a busy husband is only challenging to parenting if you let it be. I know he is rarely home before 7 p.m. during the week. But, when my first two boys were both old enough for after-school activities, I would have two places to be at 6 p.m., and would have to drag four kids out of the house. I would let the stress get the best of me because there was only one driver. I would complain how unfair it is for me to try to be in two places at once—one son was not more important than the other, how the coaches gave me evil looks for being late, made my kid run laps for not being on time—then I’d demand him to come home and help me get the kids from place to place. I would just be overwhelmed from the stress of it all. Now that I have four kids all going, I have learned that even if my husband was home to help, it is impossible to be in four places at once. Of course, if I make a special plea for my husband to come back home early for something, such as a teacher conference, special performance, etc., he ALWAYS makes the effort and if it is at all possible, he is there. He is the best and I know that if I ever need his support, he will be there for me in a heartbeat--I do wish that every mom were as lucky as I am to have such a completely supportive husband. We are truly a team in all we do.”

“Another thing I’ve learned is that your own family is like no other. You have to know your priorities and be able to live by them, operate by what things are important to your family values, what your family will devote its time to first and before anything else. And your kids will grow up with these same values.”