A Country Fair

Visiting a Country Fair is always fun. This event can be held either in the spring, fall or Arizona winter. The time of the year will be the key to the food served and possibly the games played. It is also a great way to get more of your neighbors involved. Activities can be made to include children, or not, depending on the neighborhood.

This packet contains suggestions for activities, different types of food that could be served and recipes that can be used or shared.

The secret to a successful event:

HAVE FUN !

Country Fair

Invitation Ideas:

Attach a first-prize blue ribbon or an entry blank for an official fair competition to each invitation
Make the ribbon the invitation
Send the invitations on popcorn bags that they can bring back to fill up.

Decorations:

Use checkered material to cover tables
Red, white and blue ribbons as accessories on booths and tables
Wild flowers, fruits and vegetables set in milk bottles, inverted hats or baskets placed tables
Posters and Signs for activites
Judging booths with balloons and streamers
Chairs with balloons and streamers for Cakewalk

Prizes:

Anything donated by neighborhood businesses
Blue ribbons and trophies
Photos of contestants and winners

Food and snacks:

Corn Dogs/Hot Dogs
BBQ Sandwiches
BBQ chicken or ribs
Baked Beans
Corn-on-the Cob or Roasted in husk
Homemade Ice Cream
Salads: Potato Salad
Macaroni
Bean Salad
Pies: (need extra if having pie eating contest or pie judging)
Fruit
Creme
Cakes and Cookies: Decorated for the Cake Walk
Shaved Ice or Sno Cones
Popcorn / Carmel Corn
Peanut Brittle
Soft Pretzels
Salt Water Taffy

Country Fair Activities:

1. Pie Eating Contest — Chose sides for this food fest! Just make sure the contestants like either fruit or crème pies!

2. Cake Walk for prizes — This activity could be for kids or adults or both!

3. Best Pet Contest — Kids love to show off their pets! Have categories for everything from size to best costume!

4. Raffle for prizes — This could be a money-maker for a charity or just draw names out of a hat.

5. White Elephant Stall— This gives everyone a chance to get rid of those small unwanted items and exchange them for something else. The left over items can be either saved for a neighborhood garage sale or given to charity. Remember "One man's trash is another man's treasure."

6. Pie Judging Contest— Can't find anyone to enter the pie eating contest? Then have a bake-off instead! Yum!

7. Fortune Teller— Always a hit. Make it even more fun by having fortunes printed on slips of paper and placed in a container. Everyone then picks out their fortune. Surprise!!

8. Ring or Penny Toss — This can be also be set up to win the White Elephant treasures.

9. Horseshoes Contest— One way to release tension!

10. Making Homemade Ice Cream— This is especially good if you have the "old crank style" ice cream maker. Kids love to take turns cranking the ice cream until it is frozen. Of course, the adults like the electric kind better!

11. Bobbing for Apples— Good "ice breaker"!

12. Taffy Pull— an old fashioned way to let the kids help provide some of the goodies.

BLUE RIBBON RECIPES

Caramel Popcorn

2 Cups Sugar
2 Cups Karo Syrup
2 cans Sweetened Condensed milk
2 Cups brown sugar
2 cubes butter
Popcorn

Combine butter, syrup, and milk in pan. Add sugars when butter has melted. Cook on medium heat, stirring, until sugars melt and dissolve. Place popped popcorn on large baking sheet. Pour some of the sauce over popcorn. Toss to coat. Store in airtight containers. The amount of popcorn needed will depend on if you like more or less sauce on your Carmel corn. This sauce will not harden as others do. (Karen Hubbard)

Spiced Popcorn

3 T. vegetable oil
1 tsp. Cumin
1/2 t. cayenne pepper
1 tsp. Chili powder
1/2 C. popcorn kernels
Salt

Heat oil over medium high heat and stir in spices. Add 1 kernel pops, pour in remaining kernels. Shake pan until popping ends. Season with salt immediately.

Yield: 6 servings
Prep Time: 15 minutes

Soft Pretzels

2 Tablespoons warm water, plus 1 1/3 cups warm water
1 package dry yeast
5 cups flour
Kosher salt
1/3 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup baking soda
Mustard, as an accompaniment

Preheat oven to 475 degrees F.

In a large mixing bowl, mix 2 tablespoons warm water with the yeast to dissolve it. Then stir in the remaining warm water and brown sugar. Place bowl on a mixer and using a dough hook, gradually add the flour and continue mixing until it forms a ball. Turn it out onto a work surface and knead the dough to make it smooth. Use enough flour on your work surface so the dough is not sticky.

Butter 2 sheet pans. Bring 2 quarts of water and the baking soda to boil in a large saucepan. Cut dough up into golf ball size pieces. Then roll them into 1/2-inch thick worms. Form a U then cross the ends, twisting at the middle. Fold the ends back down to meet the U (which is now an O) and press to secure the dough. Drop it into the boiling water for 30 seconds then fish it out and place it on the greased sheet pan. Sprinkle with kosher salt. Repeat with the rest of the dough. Bake for 8 minutes or until golden brown.

Yield: 20 servings
Cook Time: 20 minutes

Corn Dogs

1 C. yellow cornmeal
¼ tsp. Salt
¼ C. white sugar
egg
1 quart vegetable oil for frying
16 wooden skewers
1 C. all-purpose flour
1/8 tsp. Black pepper
4 tsp. Baking powder
1 C. milk
2 (16 ounces) packages hotdogs

Cook Time: approx. 20 minutes
Preparation time: approx. 40 minutes
Servings: 16

Preheat oil in sauce pan over medium heat.
In a medium bowl, combine cornmeal, flour, salt, pepper, sugar and baking powder. Stir in eggs and milk. Insert skewers into hotdogs. Roll them in batter until well coated. Fry 2-3 hotdogs at a time for 8-10 minutes until lightly browned. Drain on paper towels.

Pull Taffy Recipe

2 Cups Sugar
1 1/2 Cups Water
1 C. Corn Syrup
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon glycerin (can be purchased at pharmacy)
1 teaspoon vanilla (or any other flavor)
2 Tablespoons butter

Mix sugar, water, corn syrup, salt and glycerin in a heavy saucepan. Bring to a boil and cook to a temperature of 258 degrees. Remove from heat and let stand for 2-3 minutes. Then add vanilla and butter, stirring vigorously until butter is melted. Pour onto a buttered cookie sheet. Cool until lukewarm taffy can be handled. Take taffy and begin to stretch and fold, stretch and fold, stretch and fold until taffy turns white. Cut into individual pieces and wrap in wax paper.

CARAMEL APPLES

2 Packages (14 oz) bags caramels
1/4 C. Water
8 Medium apples

In a crackpot, combine caramels and water. Cover and cook on high for 1 to 1 1/2 hours, stirring frequently. Wash and dry apples. Insert stick into stem end of each apple. Turn control on low. Dip apple into hot caramel and turn to coat entire surface. Holding apple above pot, scrape off excess accumulation of caramel from bottom apple. Place on greased wax paper to cool.

State Fair Carmel Apple Salad

1 Med. Can crushed pineapple (drain and save juice)
2 C. mini marshmallows
1 beaten egg
1 Tablespoon vinegar
1 C. sugar
2 teaspoons corn starch
4 large red apples, sliced with skins on
4 large green apples, Granny Smith, diced with skins on
1 12 oz. Can skinless peanuts
2 packages whipped topping mix, Dream Whip, prepared as directed.

Mix marshmallows and drained crushed pineapple in a small bowl, cover, and refrigerate 3 hours or overnight. In a small saucepan, combine pineapple juice, beaten egg, sugar, cornstarch and vinegar, stirring and cooking on medium heat until thick. Cool and place in a small bowl refrigerate 3 hours or overnight.
In a large mixing bowl, mix the above ingredients (after refrigerating specified time) with apples, peanuts and whipped topping. Place in a large serving bowl and watch it disappear. Tastes just like peanut covered caramel apples.

Fool Proof Microwave Peanut Brittle

1 C. Sugar
1/2 C. White Corn Syrup
1 C. peanuts (dry roasted/salted)
1 tsp. Butter
1 tsp. Vanilla
1 tsp. Baking soda

In a large microwave bowl combine sugar and syrup on high for 4 minutes. Add Peanuts; stir (will turn tannish brown). Cook 4 more minutes on high. Add butter and vanilla; cook 1 minutes on high. Add soda (becomes white and foamy). Pour onto greased cookie sheet (Pam can also be used). Working quickly, slide to thin batch. Cool and break with hands. Loosen with spatula. (Kathy Ehrlich)

American Ice Cream

This is an updated version of the first American recipe for ice cream found in the papers of Thomas Jefferson and is now printed in Marie Kimball's *Thomas Jefferson Cookbook* available from the Monticello Museum shops.

6 egg yolks
1 Quart of Cream
Salt
Ice
1 Cup Sugar
2 teaspoon vanilla

Beat egg yolks until thick and lemon colored. Add, gradually, 1 cup of sugar and a pinch of salt. Bring to a boil 1 quart of cream and pour slowly on the egg mixture. Put in top of double boiler and when thickens, remove and strain through a fine sieve into bowl. When cool add 1 teaspoon of vanilla. Freeze, as usual, with one part of salt to three parts of ice. If using electric ice cream freezer, follow usual directions, but stir frequently.

Homemade Ice Cream

2 Cups milk
2 eggs, well beaten
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 Cup heavy cream
3/4 Cups sugar
1 Tablespoon flour
1 Cup half and half

In a large saucepan, beat together milk, sugar, eggs, flour and salt. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until mixture reaches 160 degrees or until it just coats a metal spoon. Cool quickly by placing pan in bowl of ice or cold water; continue to stir mixture. Add half and half and heavy cream; combine well. Add desired flavorings.* Freeze according to your ice cream maker's instructions. Makes two quarts.

* Vanilla Ice Cream. Add 2 teaspoon vanilla extract.
* Peppermint Ice Cream. Add 2 teaspoons peppermint extract. As mixture begins to freeze add 15 crushed peppermint candy rounds and 8 to 10 drops red food coloring.