

NEW SERIES (COMMON \$ENSE COOKING) WILL STRETCH FOOD BUDGETS

Diane Stacy is a nutrition educator and coach and practices Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT). Diane has a master's degree in holistic nutrition, a certificate in nutritional counseling, an advanced EFT Certificate of Completion, and a bachelor's degree in medical technology. Diane writes monthly nutrition articles for Senior Digest. This article is published in the October 2007 issue. Diane can be reached at (401) 949-2917 or dchoices@verizon.net. Her website is www.choicesandprevention.com.

On September 19th, I was fortunate to attend a press release from RI Community Food Bank and Rhode Island PBS announcing the debut of the Educational TV series: *Common Sense Cooking*. The innovative educational series of 12 different episodes instructs audiences in preparing nutritious, well-balanced meals on a limited budget. The segments (about 2 – 5 minutes long) are full of money-saving tips, menu planning strategies and easy-to-follow recipes.

This project is the result of the hard work and generosity of the Food Bank's Women Ending Hunger program. The group, which was formed in 2005, came together by a call from the Food Bank urging women leaders throughout the state to join in the mission of helping those in need. Women Ending Hunger is dedicated to empowering women to improve the health and well-being of children and families served by the Food Bank's network; however, the *Common Sense Cooking* series is helpful for everyone including Seniors.

Rhode Island PBS Development Director, Tracy Cugno facilitated the production of the series. *Common Sense Cooking* is hosted by Nancy Verde Barr, the former Executive Chef to Julia Child for 18 years and the culinary producer for PBS' *Baking with Julia* and ABC's *Good Morning America*. Nancy is also an author of 3 award-winning cookbooks and has written articles for many magazines. The series

includes guest appearances by Dr. Mary Flynn, who is a registered dietician and nutritionist at Lifespan and the Miriam Hospital where she teaches patients how to make better food choices for a healthier life style. Mary also maintains academic appointments at Brown University and the University of Rhode Island.

The series targets women because they tend to be the primary shoppers, cooks and care givers; although men can also benefit from the helpful tips on meal planning, nutrition, and shopping on a budget. The segments will air between full-length programs throughout the Rhode Island PBS broadcast schedule. Episodes of *Common Sense Cooking* are also available, in their entirety, on the Food Bank's website – www.rifoodbank.org. The website also provides recipes that are designed to be low cost, contain nutritious ingredients and easy to prepare, as well as helpful shopping tips.

NEW SERIES (COMMON \$ENSE COOKING) WILL STRETCH FOOD BUDGETS

Common Sense Cooking episodes are listed below:

1. How to Prepare a Shopping List
2. The Magic Three: Store Cards, Circulars and Coupons
3. Eating Healthy: The Fab 5 Groups
4. How to Make Six Meals for \$20
5. Breakfast is Brain Food
6. Common \$ense Snacking
7. Nutrition Lesson: Portion Proportion
8. Nutrition Lesson: How to Read Labels
9. Save Money, Eat Healthy: Bring a Lunch!
10. The Ready Pantry
11. The Benefits of Meatless Meals
12. Dine In Instead! Alternative to Eating Out

During the press release, the episode: How to Make Six Meals for \$20 was shown. Dr. Mary Flynn shows Nancy Verde Barr six meals that serve 4 people. That's 24 servings! It's amazing the variety of meals you can prepare on a limited budget. Extra virgin olive oil was used for each meal and this was the only ingredient not included in the cost. Although extra virgin olive oil tends to be expensive, it is nutritious and tastes good. Mary recommends buying it when it is on sale. The key items you should have in your pantry are a variety of pastas including whole wheat pasta, brown rice, variety of beans, and frozen and canned vegetables, according to Dr. Mary Flynn. With just these few ingredients, the combinations are endless. I'm eager to watch all the episodes.

Common Sense Cooking would not have been possible without the generosity of Rhode Island PBS, RI Community Food Bank, Bank of America and special gifts from The Rhode Island Foundation, Johnson & Wales University, Lowe's and Women Ending Hunger.