

THE LOTUS

A Monthly Publication of the Federation of India Community Associations (FICA)



Feb - March 2020

Since 1967

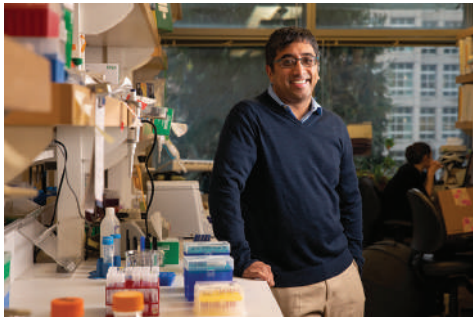
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Recognizing local Clevelander Jay Shendure, MD, PhD.



Science is experiencing a genomics revolution, and our very own Dr. Jay Shendure, a native of Solon, Ohio, is one of the innovators sustaining its momentum. Genomics is the study of all of a person's genes (the genome), including interactions of those genes with each other and with the person's environment.

Dr. Shendure, MD, PhD, is an accomplished scientist at Howard Hughes Medical Institute and a professor of genome sciences at the University of Washington. A native of Solon, OH, and a graduate of Solon HS, he pursued his undergraduate studies at Princeton University. Then, as a Fulbright Scholar, he worked in India for about a year, before moving on to obtain his MD, PhD from Harvard Medical School.

One may wonder, what is a Fulbright Scholars Program....

"A Fulbright Scholars Program is one of the most widely recognized and prestigious International exchange programs in the world that grants support for graduate study and research in 140 countries. ... Recipients are offered two funded years of graduate study with the possibility of a third-year extension."

Jay is now working in Seattle, WA. His work has helped make DNA sequencing faster, more informative and less expensive. "He is a lead principal investigator for Seattle Flu Study, funded by Gates Ventures, the private office of Bill Gates. More recently, he is part of the team that now supports SCAN, a public health response to understanding spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in the Seattle region."

Along the way, in his own lab, Jay "developed a platform for sequencing only the genome's protein-coding regions - the exome - and demonstrated how this cost-effective strategy can identify disease related gene mutations. Labs around the world have since used exome sequencing to discover genes associated with hundreds of human disorders. More recently, Shendure's team showed that it's possible to sequence the complete genome of a fetus from samples obtained noninvasively from the parents. As Shendure and others apply his methods to real problems, his cross-disciplinary lab team continues to develop new technologies."

Jay has earned various awards for his scientific achievements. Amongst them are: Curt Stern Award, National Institutes of Health Director's Pioneer Award, Innovators Under 35, and Richard Lounsbery Award from National Academy of Sciences.

Jay, a pride of the Cleveland Indian community, lives in Seattle, WA with his wife Alex and children Ariya, Daniel & Benjamin.

FICA responds to Covid 19

SHRI SHAH

This article calls for the attention of all the readers, today we are being faced with a monstrosity, coronavirus has taken over Cuyahoga county and surrounding counties in Ohio and we and many individuals find ourselves facing uncertainty in these challenging times. That being said, there are hopes to ease some of the tensions. Individuals and groups in our own Indian community have stepped up, FICA in collaboration with sister organizations, has set up a group of volunteers. The Northeast Ohio Indian volunteer team for COVID-19 has set up a service where you can call the helpline number and be directed to a volunteer in your area who is able to get your essential groceries, RX prescriptions, and help to talk things out during this difficult time. In order to follow the supervision of the United State surgeon general, all of our volunteers will be wearing masks and gloves to ensure we promote the best safety practices. When individuals give the helpline number a call they will need to provide their name, phone number, a list of everything they need, and what prescriptions as well as their date of birth.

(216) 710. 5111

We hope to help flatten the curve and encourage others in our community to do so as well. FICA is asking the readers to please wash their hands frequently, practice social distancing, and most never forget how important kindness is (now more than ever). We as a community can all do our parts to ensure the preservation of our humanity and culture.



Dear Community,

Together, we are facing a very challenging, fluid and unprecedented situation. The Corona Virus / COVID-19 is affecting our families, businesses, community and way of life. In light of this unique environment, we at FICA in collaboration with our Sister Organizations (**SEWA, NEOMM, JSGC, IAGC, EKAL, AIPNO, ICAGA, OSA, GGSSC, NEOTA, BCS, AFMI, MARWARI, SHIVA VISHNU TEMPLE, IAGY**) want you to know that we are here for you. Our dedicated community of volunteers have stepped up to help all those in need.

If any Senior citizens or Immunocompromised individuals need to get Groceries or Prescribed Medicines or urgently needed supplies and are unable to go out.

Please call us at **216 710-5111**

Our volunteers will make the shopping trips for you & Deliver at your door step. Again, our HELPLINE Number is:

216 710-5111

As we go through these mentally challenging times, if you feel the need to just talk and share your thoughts, please call us at **216 710-5111**. Our volunteers are here to lift your spirits and offer free counseling services. Once again, our Helpline Number is **216 710-5111**.

Our volunteers are also offering free tutoring services for the youth of the community. Please call if you feel the need for any of this as well. We are available to help you. Please call us at **216-710-5111**.

We are in this together. Please stay safe and healthy.

Team Indian volunteers of NE Ohio COVID -19

Federation of India Community Associations of NEO

Email Us: socialmedia.ficacleveland@gmail.com

Call On: 216-791-FICA (3422)

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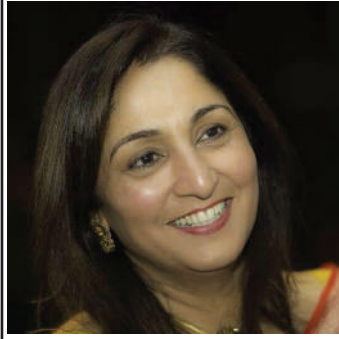
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Presidents Message



Dear Friends,

A big thank you to the Indian community of N.E. Ohio & Republic Day 2020 team for making the Republic Day function to be an extraordinary success. The attendance was one of the highest ever and the entertainment was of high quality and well received by the audience. Kudos to all the performers. FICA wished to celebrate the talents and achievements of somebody from our own community, thus, chose Dr. Sameer Kapadia, as the chief guest. He was well-received and appreciated. Taking in consideration the audience's interest, the speeches were informative, enjoyable and kept to bare minimum. The event would not have been the success

that it was, without the generosity of our sponsors, who are the back bone of our event. FICA sincerely appreciates all of them and gives a special shout out to our repeat sponsors who support the event annually.

As the springtime weather arrives in North East Ohio, we look forward with renewed enthusiasm to energize our many initiatives. Two of the newest initiative are Helping Hands and Nursing Home visitation. They are in need of volunteers also. Please be sure to reach out to me personally, or any member of the executive committee or the board of trustees to volunteer your time and/or resources to support these initiatives.

Thank you again. Let's keep the magic going...!

Ritu Mahna & E.C. Team



STANDING IN SOLIDARITY

Editor's Note

SANGITA BAFNA

Unprecedented times...

We are only in the first quarter of 2020, and already we have witnessed unforeseen misfortunes....

January, 2020 was occupied with the unexpected and tragic death of NBA Legend, Kobe Bryant. February brought on the news of Coronavirus, or COVID-19, which started in China, but rampantly spread throughout the globe, affecting 143 countries around the world. This virus has become a pandemic, shutting down countries, crashing economies, closing businesses, schools, modes of transportation and creating an unprecedented healthcare stress and fear. It has introduced us to a new phrase, "social distancing."

Our daily lives have been turned upside down; families living in the same house are practicing social distancing (keeping a distance of 6ft or more). We fear for our elderly parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, friends, and neighbors. We fear for our medical community who are at the front line of this pandemic, caring for patients and putting their own lives at risk. We fear for the world. Yet, during this extremely difficult time for everyone across the globe, we do see acts of kindness that make us realize the beauty of the human spirit. We hear of stories across the globe....Pizza places, struggling to keep their doors open, but are still dropping off free pizza for the medical staff at hospitals. Starbucks is offering free coffee to all healthcare workers until May. People are taking care of their elderly neighbors. Communities are finding ways to feed school kids, who would have gone without food, during school

closures. Volunteers are sewing masks and protective gear badly needed by the medical community. These stories are a microcosm of the larger effort worldwide. We can take comfort in these stories of strength, empathy, courage and selflessness. People are leading with their heart and putting the most vulnerable first during this challenging time.

Our local Indian community, led by FICA, united to create opportunities to help the vulnerable, elderly and needy. The outpour of desire to help is deeply moving. People are dealing with challenges and changes in their own lives, yet they are willing to help where and when needed. The generosity and support of the community is heart-warming. It's during these trying periods, we see the resilience and the beauty of the human spirit in our community.

These times are unprecedented and it will take long time before we get back to "normal," but even then, the world will never be the same again. **A new normal will emerge.** Just as the world changed after 9/11, forcing us to adjust to a new "normal", so too will be the case after we recover from COVID-19. In the meantime, we are thankful for social media and communication applications (Facebook, WhatsApp, Zoom, etc.) to keep us connected to each other. We have to practice "social distancing" but not necessarily social isolation.

Please practice "social distancing" and stay well.

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www.aaiwo.org | Lynette Sequeira
- American Federation of Muslims of Indian Origin
www.afmi.org | Dr. Razia Ahmed
- Association of Indian Physicians of Northern Ohio (AIPNO)
www.aipno.org | Dr. Mona Gupta
- American Society of Engineers of Indian

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Bengali Cultural Society
www.bcscl.org | Soumitra Ghosh

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www.clevelandgujaratisamaj.org | Nilesh Patel

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India-Ohio Chamber of Commerce
www.indiaohiochamber.com | Radhika Reddy

Indian Christian Association, Michael Sreshta

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Kasturi Kannada Society
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www.neomm.org | Shekhar Ganore

Marwari Association | Sushila Mohanka

Orissa Society of America | Birendra Jena, (330) 544-1725 | birendrajena@hotmail.com

Punjabi Cultural Society
www.guidestar.org | Burjinder S Dhanoa

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NEO Tamil Sangam (NEOTS)
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Republic Day Celebration, 2020

By SUJATA LAKHE

A Sell-out crowd of just under 500 celebrated the 71st Republic day of India on Saturday, February 1, 2020, at Embassy Suites in Independence, Ohio. FICA (Federation of India Communities Association) has been organizing this gala dinner and fundraiser for the community since its inception; the very first such celebration was held on 26 January, 1964 in the basement of the Euclid Methodist Church. This evening the lobby of Embassy Suites was glittering with traditional apparel of India, Saari and Salwaar-Kamiz donned by most women and some silk turbans and men in silk festive wears. Many paying tribute to the green, white and Saffron of Indian flag by incorporating it in their pins, ties and clothing. The atmosphere had mouth-watering, complex aroma of Indian food, Samosa, Chaat, veggie fry, fish cutlets and chicken tikka, catered by Inchin's Bamboo Garden, located in North Olmsted.



Dr. Atul C Mehta

The evening began with the singing of the "Stars Spangled Banner" by Tanmayee Dixit, followed by the Indian National Anthem, "Jana Gana Mana" by Pallavi Chavan and Harsha Rane.

FICA's Board of Trustees Chairman, Sudarshan Sathe, extended a warm welcome and spoke about current social projects including Project Seva, Shiksha Daan, India Cultural Gardens and Helping Hands. He described FICA as a legacy and gift by the earlier pioneers of our community, whose efforts allowed preservation of cultural and linguistic history of India. He said FICA has provided a platform from which the Indian community can communicate and bridge with the larger American society.....

with one Indian voice. He emphasized how in the past, (before the present polarized environment), Political leaders of both parties have addressed the community, and it is through FICA that our community has been able to participate in healing after catastrophic events such as after 9/11, earthquakes and attacks on Jewish community. He also made a special mention of The Lotus, FICA's newsletter, which was honored by the State of Ohio with presentation of "Historical Marker." Lotus was the first ever ethnic newsletter in the entire country. He congratulated Sangita Bafna, the current Editor of Lotus, for continuing the legacy. He emphasized the importance of events like Republic Day celebration, Golf outing, Anand Mela, etc, in maintaining the financial health of the organization. However, the organization could not thrive without the hard work and community reach of its present President, Ritu Mahna and her team. In talking about the future endeavors of the organization, he emphasized the need to build a Community Center to give a home to FICA and its community. The community center will allow the community to assimilate and keep its cultural roots intact. FICA President Ritu Mahna introduced Cleveland Clinic's Dr. Atul C. Mehta, who in turn introduced the Chief Guest for the event, Dr. Samir Kapadia, MD.



Dr. Samir Kapadia

Dr. Mehta and Dr. Kapadia, both from the state of Gujarat, got their medical degrees from the same college in Gujarat and are currently colleagues at the Cleveland Clinic. Dr. Mehta emphasized that Dr. Kapadia is among the top 100 most influential cardiologists in the world.

He is the Department Chair of Cardiovascular Medicine at the Cleveland Clinic, one of the youngest in its history, according to Dr. Mehta. In his Keynote address Dr. Kapadia touched on importance of celebrating Republic day and knowing the history of our freedom and rules of our governance. He remarked about exceptional length of Indian constitution. Seven people had started to write it, however, only two stayed on and completed the draft, one of which was Baba Ambedkar, a major architect of the Constitution of India.

Dr. Kapadia went on to discuss the work culture of the Cleveland Clinic's cardiology department and ended his speech by requesting everyone to feast in honor of Republic Day celebration. Before dinner, a medley of vibrant folk dances, from different states of India, were presented by various groups of the community. For full-length Video of the performance pls email to info@ClevelandPeople.com. The evening ended with dinner, dessert and coffee.

After many years, Cleveland's weather cooperated and guests didn't have to brave blizzards and white-out conditions!

Jai Bharat Mata

(Continued on page 4)





Republic Day Celebrations

(Continued from page 3)



COVID-19 and College Students

DEVIKA WALIA

On Tuesday March 10, 2020, Governor Mike DeWine issued that all Ohio Universities and Schools operate remotely /online to help prevent the spread of Corona Virus or COVID-19. This request came into effect soon after Ohio State University canceled all of their "in-person" classes & lectures. This sent a wave of shock to college students, who were forced to leave an independent lifestyle they had grown accustomed to, and stay at home with their families.

Families are also struggling to accommodate working from home and having kids at home... all using online resources. Unfortunately, many families don't have access to the internet, and with the city being on social quarantine for 3-4 weeks, all libraries and internet cafes are closed. The only silver lining is that many universities have adopted a Pass/Fail system, so that students don't have worry about lack of resources to complete their coursework.

This is hard on everyone, including college students. However, this too shall pass....and hopefully we can resume our normal routine, sooner than later.





Volunteering at Shiksha Daan



BY MARIA KONDRATOVA

Since October 2019, I have been volunteering weekly at Shiksha Daan on Sundays from 2:30-4:30pm. Located at the Presbyterian Church on Noble Road, Shiksha Daan is a tutoring program that has the goal of spreading education to kids in under-privileged communities. The kids are helped with homework assignments, reading, and math exercises, and though the tutoring sessions last for only two hours, a lot gets done and the time flies by really fast.

Cheesiness aside, Shiksha Daan has really changed my life. I look forward to going there each weekend, knowing that I will get to help out the same kids and get to know them on a personal level. I also love that the kids always put in effort and are eager to learn even when they are tired or just want to play games. It is amazing to see all of their progress when they come back each session.

The kids also have a way of keeping me in the loop. While I am teaching them how to do fractions or which verb to use, they never fail to let me know about the latest trend, like Tik Tok, a video-sharing app. This type of interaction between the student and tutor adds to the personal connection, and leads to another aspect that I like about Shiksha Daan. The environment is relaxed and open.

Although it is a time to study and learn, the tutoring sessions are followed up by a pizza break and game. Seeing the kids' wide eyes when it is pizza time always puts a smile on my face. Breaking up the session into two parts instills a good work ethic in the kids by showing them that after they have completed exercises that might have been hard for them, they then get to relax. Shiksha Daan is a wonderful program that teaches both the student and the tutor that having fun while practicing academic skills enhances the learning process.



AAIWO Helpline open during the Covid-19 Outbreak

The Association of Asian Indian Women in Ohio (AAIWO) is offering critical help and support to anyone in need, especially senior citizens who are living alone.

Please call our helpline number at (440) 218-6965 or email us at: aaiwocleveland@gmail.com and let us know how we can help you.

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Precious Pranic Mindful Breathing Yoga (Part-1)

By R. GEHANI



Caveat: This essay is strictly for general educational and/or informational purposes, and the contents may not be used for any kind of health guidance which requires consulting a professional physician.

The recent pandemic attacks of Corona Virus – 19 on people’s lungs around the world have spotlighted the significance of breath for our minds, bodies, and spirits. Our breath is our most valuable, and perhaps least expensive source of our physical as well as mental health – until we experience difficulty

breathing. Yet it is quite poorly understood. Whereas we can live without food for a few days, without water for a few hours, but we struggle without air even after a few minutes. According to the renowned yoga Swamy Ramdev followed in India by millions, one of the simple self-tests recommended to rule out the likelihood of Covid-19, is to test whether one can hold one’s breath for 1 minute in the case of an adult, and 30 seconds by an elderly person. Those affected with COVID-19 may have difficulty holding breath for over 10-20 seconds. In this part-1 we will explore some basic elements of ancient Indian breathing practice.

MINDFUL PRANAYAM YOGIC PRACTICE

More than c.2,200 years ago, Rishi Patanjali in Yoga Sutra, proposed an ancient Mindful Pranayama Breathing yoga practice. This was included as one of the main 8 limbs of yoga practice (II: 29). He again refers to pranayama for better breath-control in II:49 as:

Tasmin-sati svaasa-prasvaasayor-gati-vichedah praanaayaamah.

This proposes that the breath-control involves not only rhythmic breathing but mindfully altering the pauses and turns between inhales and exhales.

Mindful Pranayama involves following 6 gentle steps.



Step-1: Index and middle fingers of right hand are placed on the bridge of the nose. With the thumb of same right hand the RIGHT nostril is closed. Important to stay calm and mindful, with heart beating calmly.

Step-2: INHALE calmly and mindfully deep into belly through the LEFT nostril with a slow count from 1 to 4. Mindfully note how breath enters the nostril, then fills first upper then middle and lower lungs, then enters the stomach, and contracts the diaphragm.

[Picture: Adapted from The Art of Living]

Step-3: While the RIGHT nostril remains closed, with ring finger and little finger of RIGHT hand the LEFT nostril is closed too. Mindfully the breath

is held in the lungs and belly. Slowly count from 1 to 4.

Step-4: Then the thumb of RIGHT hand is lifted to open the RIGHT nostril, and calmly EXHALE as it mindfully leaves the belly, lungs, and nostril while counting slowly from 1 to 4.

Step-5: When fully exhaled, PAUSE mindfully (before inhaling) counting slowly from 1 to 4. This completes one 4 x (4 second) set of Inhale-Pause-Exhale-Pause cycle with RIGHT nostril.

STEP-6: Mindfully repeat the 4 x 4 set from Step-2 to Step-5 of Inhale-Pause-Exhale-Pause for 4 + 4 = 8 cycles with RIGHT nostril.

STEP-7: Next mindfully repeat with LEFT nostril the similar 8 cycles of 4 x 4 set by inhaling – pausing – exhaling – pausing.

EFFECTS

In Ancient India, mindful Pranic breathing was recommended to calm minds when individuals faced uncertain times – as we are facing in 2020 with the Covid-19 Pandemic. Some students practice mindful Pranic breathing practice before taking a major exam, or when they are about to lose their temper, or afraid to face a challenge. Since mind and breathing are closely connected, Mindful Pranayama Breathing may help calm the mind as we zip through our hectic roller-coaster lives. Some people may also feel some relief from their pain during Pranayama as they are mindfully focusing their mind on inhaling-pausing-exhaling-and-pausing. Mind mainly does one thing, and depending on the intensity of the pain, the mind may ignore feeling the pain. What a relief if that happens just with our finger tips.

CONTRA-INDICATIONS

Avoid doing or rushing through Pranayama Breathing yoga practice. Pregnant women, elders, all people with ailments and medical conditions related to breathing related functions must consult their physicians before practicing Pranayama. Other common caveats may apply. In other advanced practices Pranayama may involve breath cessation – which requires the guidance of a Yoga Guru.

More advanced elements and benefits of Mindful Pranic Breathing Yoga will be shared in Part-2 of this value-adding essay in the next issue of Lotus.

or multiple years until recently Dr. R. Ray Gehani was an active member of the FICA executive committee and a member of its Board of Trustees. He contributed series of articles in Lotus on Yoga, Gandhi, Modern India’s heritage, and more. The views expressed here are not of the University of Akron, where Dr. Gehani conducts research studies on the role of spirituality and global faiths on business management, creativity, and innovation. He recently contributed a chapter in a major global handbook on The Genesis of Mindfulness in India and Appropriation in the West.

SAHELI...

Hello, my name is Kokila Patel and I’m the current Chairperson of the organization “Saheli,” of Greater Cleveland. “SAHELI” started twenty years ago, under the auspices of AAIIWO. Its purpose is to support Asian American Indian women, who find themselves alone in their efforts to establish a joyful existence in the American society.

Whether you have lost a spouse, are a divorcee, or going through other difficulties in your life, you will find camaraderie in our group. “Saheli” will empower you to face any adversity, providing assistance, advice and friendship in challenging times. The purpose of this organization is to provide aid to the vulnerable and lonely women of the community, through a support system of friends, meetings (exchanging ideas, recipes, etc.), and activities (card games, trips to plays/movies, etc). We share fun outdoor experiences together like picnics, camping trips, etc.; we even travel together (cruises, etc), strengthening bonds of friendship.

In short, “Saheli” offers its members support and resources, as they are getting back on their feet. If you are interested in joining, please email me at natukoki60@hotmail.com.

No women should ever have to stand alone, and that is the goal of “Saheli”. We are here to be your family.

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CIFF44 Cancelled: Reinvented to comply with Social isolation rules

By SUJATA LAKHE

CIFF44 (44th Cleveland International Film Festival) in March 2020 was cancelled due to restriction of socialization order from the Governor of Ohio as a response to preventing spread of Corona virus in this historical pandemic. CIFF will permanently move the Festival to Playhouse Square in 2021. The move, which follows a 14-year run at the Cedar Lee Theatre and a 30-year run at Tower City Cinemas, will mark the Festival's third home in the organization's history.

During the time social distancing to keep ourselves safe we are all striving to find new ways to connect, the Cleveland International Film Festival has announced a reinvented

CIFF44. They have been able to create a space for Film Festival Family to reunite to support and celebrate independent films and filmmakers.

The highly anticipated Festival trailer, which would have marked Opening Night of CIFF44, was released on their Website clevelandfilm.org. As usual it is catchy and cool and was produced and created by the brilliant minds at Fusion Filmworks and features the song Miles To Go from local musicians Astronymer and Jul Big Green.

To add to the virtual festivities, CIFF will be releasing new podcast episodes of CIFF Speaks.

Listeners can join hosts Dee Perry and Aaron Spears as they talk film, do a handful of CIFF giveaways, and even invite special guests to join them to discuss all things CIFF.

Find CIFF Speaks at clevelandfilm.org/ciffspeaks or on iTunes, Stitcher, or wherever you subscribe to your favorite podcasts.

CIFF supporters are invited and encouraged to visit clevelandfilm.org/alums for a listing of CIFF film alums from past Festivals that are currently available for streaming. Keep up with other on line programing they might add by going on their website/FaceBook/twitter with #CIFF44

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BUT MUTUAL AID BETWEEN FORCES
FIGHTING FOR THE SAME OBJECTIVE.
- SAMORA MACHEL -

RECIPE CORNER

Apple Dumplings

BY SHAMA ABRAHAM

Servings: 1
Prep Time: 15 minutes Cook Time: 40 minutes Yield: 16 dumplings

- INGREDIENTS**
- 2 (8 ounce) cans crescent rolls
 - 2 sticks butter
 - 1 1/2 C brown sugar
 - 1 tsp vanilla
 - 1 tsp cinnamon
 - 1 1/2 cup 7 Up or Sprite
 - 2 apples (Golden Delicious or Granny Smith)



- STEPS**
- 1) Butter a 13 x 9 inch baking dish.
 - 2) Preheat the oven at 350 F.
 - 3) Peel and core apples, than cut each apple into 8 slices
 - 4) Roll each apple slice in a crescent roll and place in a buttered dish.
 - 5) Melt butter, stir in sugar, vanilla and cinnamon, and when it's thickened, remove from heat and pour over the dumplings.
 - 6) Pour the soda in the middle and along the edges of a pan(not over the rolls)
 - 7) Bake for 35-45 minutes, or until they become golden brown.
 - 8) Serve warm, with vanilla ice cream

Adapted from <https://omgchocolatedesserts.com/easy-apple-dumplings/?epik=dj0yJnU9WEIjCHfZQlhMTIUzdVkwNDI5c2c0WkZNV9tTGRONlcmBj16SG4yWEN1a3ltVU1QNTdyMXdLY1RBjM09MyZ0PUFBQUFBRjNRTDZv>



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