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Feed the Mosasaur Festival set for Feb. 23

FEBRUARY 12, 2008

People who take their eating seriously are invited to bring a healthy appetite to a food and cooking extravaganza that will benefit the Georgia Southern Museum.

The third annual Feed the Mosasaur Festival will be held on Saturday, Feb. 23, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. in the Nessmith-Lane Continuing Education Building on the campus of Georgia Southern University.

Taking its name from the mosasaur the 78-million-year-old fossil skeleton that dominates the Museum's Hall of Natural History the festival will offer visitors an opportunity to sample food from more than 20 of the region's most popular restaurants.

In addition, the festival will include an amateur baking contest for adults and children, a signature dish competition for professional food service providers, a series of specialized cooking classes, a bake sale, and activities for kids.

'As usual, this event will have something to offer people of all ages who enjoy eating or cooking,' said Kelly Tharp, the chair of the Feed the Mosasaur committee. 'If you like to eat, you can taste some of the most delicious dishes in southeast Georgia, and if you like to cook, you can show off your skills and share your most treasured recipes in the amateur bake-off.'

Admission for the Feed the Mosasaur Festival is \$9 per person for adults and \$7.50 per person for senior citizens, students and children. Kids under the age of 3 will be admitted for free.

All proceeds from the festival will be used to support the Georgia Southern Museum's many educational exhibits and programs.

'This festival provides people with an opportunity to have a lot of fun while they support a very worthy cause,' Museum Director Brent Tharp said. 'For just a few dollars, they can feast on an amazingly wide variety of food under one roof.'

Sponsored in part by Sea Island Bank, the festival will feature food and drink from Blue Moon Cafe, Candy Bouquet, Daily Grind Coffee House, Flat Creek Lodge, French Quarter Cafe, Holiday's Greek and Italian Restaurant, Hugo's, Locos Deli and Pub, Longhorn's Steakhouse, McAlister's Deli, Moe's Southwest Grill, Ogeechee River Coffee House, Pampered Chef, Shane's Rib Shack, Sugar Magnolia Bakery, Tupperware, Vandy's Bar-B-Q, Virna's Gourmet Cookies and Sweets, and more.

The Cooking with Class Institutes are classes that will share a popular cooking topic or teach participants how to prepare a specific dish. This year's schedule includes adult classes devoted to coffee tasting, fast hors d'oeuvres, luncheon tea, and soups. There are also children's classes for candy-making and liquid nitrogen ice cream.

The fee for each class ranges from \$10 to \$20 per person. Because of space limitations, advance registration is strongly encouraged, but there may be a few openings on the day of the festival.

The Best Bites Bake-Off is a cooking contest open to amateur chefs of all ages. There will be adult categories for bread, cakes, cookies and bars, and pies. Youngsters can test their culinary skills in the children's dessert competition, which will have separate divisions for ages 4-9 and 10-14.

First-place winners in each bake-off category will receive a festival T-shirt. The top three entries in each category will receive a ribbon and a certificate, and their recipes will be published in the 2009 edition of the official 'Feed the Mosasaur Cookbook.'"

Anyone who wishes to enter the Best Bites Bake-Off must deliver their entries to the Nessmith-Lane Continuing Education Building between 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. on the day of the festival. There is no entry fee, but all entries will be placed in a bake sale to benefit the Museum. The judging will take place between 10:30 a.m. and noon, and the winners will be announced at noon during the prize ceremony.

Professional cooks will compete in the Best Bites Signature Dish Competition, which will include separate categories for appetizers, Asian, barbeque, bread, dessert, entrees, fried chicken, Mexican, and pizza. The winner in each category will receive a plaque to display in their place of business.

Judging for the Best Bites Signature Dish competition will take place on Wednesday, Feb. 13, and the winners will be announced at the festival.

The Nessmith-Lane Continuing Education Building is located at the corner of Chandler Road and Plant Drive. For more information on the Feed the Mosasaur Festival, or to register for any of the cooking classes, visit <http://ceps.georgiasouthern.edu/museum/ftm> , email jhendrix@georgiasouthern.edu , or call (912) 681-5993.

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