

Duck River Electric Membership Corporation

Closing the Circle of Christmas

A glass jar filled with various cookies, tied with a red ribbon featuring white stars, set against a background of green pine branches and pine needles. The jar is the central focus, with a red ribbon tied around its neck. The cookies inside are of various shapes and colors, including white, brown, and pink. The background is a soft-focus green pine branch with pine needles and pine cones.

DREMC Holiday Foods: 1974-2016
Recipes from the Kitchen of Ann Throneberry

*Closing
the
Circle of
Christmas*

DREMC Holidays Foods Programs

1974 — 2016

Recipes from the kitchen of

Ann Throneberry

Appetizers & Beverages

Herbed Feta & Sun-Dried Tomato Dip

1 (6 oz.) container crumbled feta cheese
6 oz. cream cheese, softened
½ cup sun-dried tomatoes in oil
½ cup mayonnaise
½ cup sour cream
¼ cup firmly packed fresh basil leaves,
coarsely chopped
1 tbsp. chopped fresh dill
1 tsp. lemon zest
1 garlic clove, minced
¼ tsp. crushed red pepper
¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

Process all ingredients in a food processor 10-15 seconds or until blended. Serve with veggies.

Yield: 10 servings

Pistachio-Crusted Goat Cheese Log

1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
1 (8 oz.) log goat cheese, softened
½ cup finely chopped dried apricots
3 tbsp. finely chopped green onions
2 tsp. chopped fresh thyme
½ tsp. fine sea salt
¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
¾ cup roasted, salted pistachios, chopped

Beat cream cheese and goat cheese with an electric mixer until smooth; beat in apricots and next 4 ingredients until well-blended. Turn mixture out onto a large piece of plastic wrap to shape into an 8X2 inch log. Wrap in plastic wrap and chill 4 hours or until firm. Unwrap cheese log; roll in pistachios to coat. Serve immediately or chill, wrapped in plastic wrap until ready to serve.

Yield: 12-16 servings

Texas Dip

1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese
1 cup sour cream
2 (16 oz.) cans refried beans
1 (4 ½ oz.) can chopped green chilies, drained
1 pkg. taco seasoning mix
4 cups shredded Mexican cheese blend, divided

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Microwave cream cheese and sour cream in a large bowl on high 1 minute or until cheese is softened. Remove from microwave. Mix with wire whisk until smooth. Add refried beans, green chilies, seasoning mix and 2 cup of cheese; mix well. Spread bean mixture into a 9X13 inch baking dish, sprayed with non-stick cooking spray. Sprinkle with remaining 2 cups cheese. Bake 25 minutes or until cheese is melted. Serve with tortilla chips.

Yield: 8 cups or 64 servings

Hot Crab Dip

2 (8 oz.) pkgs. reduced fat cream cheese,
softened
1 (8 oz.) container light sour cream
¼ cup mayonnaise
1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 tbsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. dry mustard
¼ tsp. garlic salt
1 lb. fresh crabmeat, drained
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
Garnish: chopped fresh parsley
Crackers or toasted French bread rounds

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine first 7 ingredients, stirring until blended. Fold in crabmeat. Spoon mixture into a 7X11 inch baking dish; sprinkle evenly with cheddar cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes or until bubbly. Garnish, if desired. Serve immediately with crackers or toasted French bread rounds.

Yield: 6 servings

Chicken & Onion Cheese Spread

1 (10 oz.) can premium chunk white chicken in water, (do not drain)
2 (8 oz.) pkgs. fat free cream cheese, softened
½ cup fat free sour cream
1 envelope dry onion soup mix
¼ cup green or red pepper, chopped (optional)

Mix all ingredients with a hand mixer on low speed for about 1-2 minutes or until well mixed. Serve with crackers.

Yield: 30 servings

Pomegranate-Orange Sparkler

1 cup pomegranate juice, chilled
1 cup orange juice, chilled
¼ cup granulated sugar
2 cups sparkling water, chilled
4 lemon wedges

Combine pomegranate juice, orange juice and sugar in a large pitcher; stir until sugar dissolves. Stir in sparkling water and serve immediately over ice with lemon wedges.

Yield: 4 servings

Orange Lemonade

Juice of 4 lemons
Juice of 2 oranges
½ cup sugar or granulated artificial sweetener
2 quarts cold water

Mix together. Serve chilled over ice.

Yield: 8 servings

Pomegranate-Ginger Ale Punch

1 cup pomegranate juice
1 cup pineapple juice
4 orange slices
Diet ginger ale for serving

In a small pitcher, combine the pomegranate juice, pineapple juice and orange slices and stir well. Add enough ice to come halfway up the side of the pitcher, then top with ginger ale. Stir again and serve.

Yield: 4 servings

Fruity Freeze Drink

1 cup fat free frozen yogurt (any flavor)
1 cup diet Sprite-chilled
7 ice cubes

Put all ingredients in a blender on high for 45 seconds or until ice cubes are crushed.

Yield: 2 servings

Harper's Guiltless Pumpkin Dip

1 (15oz.) can Pumpkin Puree (not pie filling)
1 tbsp. pumpkin pie spice
1 tsp. Cinnamon
¼ tsp. Nutmeg
Splash of vanilla extract
1(16 oz.) tub light frozen whipped topping, thawed

Mix pumpkin, spices, and vanilla in a large bowl. Fold in whipped topping. Refrigerate for at least an hour. Serve chilled with graham crackers or ginger snaps. *This can be made a day or two in advance, and spices can be adjusted to taste.

Yield: 12 servings

Christmas Punch

1 gallon apple juice
1 (2 liter) bottle diet Mountain Dew
½ cup cinnamon red hots
½ cup lemon juice

In a large pot, bring apple juice, Mountain Dew and red hots to a boil. Reduce heat. Keep stirring until all red hots are dissolved. Add lemon juice. Stir well. Serve warm or chilled

Yield: 24 servings

Breads

Red Velvet Banana Bread

2 (15¼ oz.) boxes red velvet cake mix
6 eggs
¾ cup vegetable oil
6 very ripe bananas, mashed
1 (12 oz.) pkg. semisweet chocolate chips
1 cup chopped walnuts
8 oz. white candy melts
Sprinkles

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line 5 (8x3¼x2½) inch loaf pans with parchment paper. Spray with cooking spray. Set aside. Place first 5 ingredients in a large bowl. With an electric mixer, beat on low for 20 seconds, and then turn up speed to medium and mix for 2 minutes. Stir in chocolate chips and walnuts. Pour batter into loaf pans. Bake for 40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean. Let cool. Place candy melts in a microwave safe bowl. Microwave on high for 1-2 minutes or until completely melted. Stir until smooth. Pour into a clear pastry bag. Cut the tip off and drizzle melted candy over the cooled bread. Let the candy melts set for 30 minutes. For gift giving, wrap in clear plastic and tie a bow around it and add a gift tag. Store at room temperature for 24 hours or in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

Yield: 5 loaves

Red Velvet Scones

2 cups self-rising flour
½ cup granulated sugar
¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
6 tbsp. cold unsalted butter, cubed
¾ cup heavy cream, not whipped
2 tsp. red food coloring
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 (8oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
¼ cup confectioners' sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a baking sheet with cooking spray. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, granulated sugar and cocoa. Using a pastry blender, cut butter into flour mixture until butter is the size of small peas. In a small bowl, whisk together cream, food coloring and vanilla. Make a well in the center of dry ingredients; add cream mixture, stirring until combined. Shape dough into a ball. Place dough on prepared pan; press into a 7 inch circle. Cut into 8 wedges. (Do not separate) Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, about 23 minutes. Let cool in pan on a wire rack at least 30 minutes. In a medium bowl, beat cream cheese and confectioners' sugar with a mixer at medium speed until smooth. Serve scones with cream cheese. Store in an airtight container up to 2 days.

Yield: 8 servings

Pumpkin Pie Crescents

1 can refrigerated crescent dinner rolls
½ cup canned pumpkin pie filling
½ tsp. pumpkin pie spice
1 egg yolk
½ cup confectioners' sugar
1 tbsp. maple syrup
½ - 1 tbsp. milk

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Combine pumpkin pie filling, egg yolk and pumpkin pie spice. Unroll crescents and place 1 slightly heaping tablespoon of pumpkin pie mix on each crescent. Starting with the large end, roll the crescent over once and slightly pinch the sides to contain the filling. Place on a parchment paper lined pan. Bake 10-12 minutes or until browned. Combine confectioners' sugar, milk and syrup to form a smooth glaze. Place glaze in a small plastic bag, snip the corner and drizzle over rolls.

Yield: 6 servings

Sour Cream Muffins

2 cups self-rising flour
1 tbsp. granulated sugar
¼ tsp. salt
1½ cups sour cream
¼ cup whole milk
2 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
1 large egg

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray a 12 cup muffin pan with cooking spray. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar and salt. Make a well in the center of dry ingredients. In a small bowl, whisk together sour cream, milk, melted butter and egg. Pour sour cream mixture into well; stir just until moistened. Spoon mixture into prepared muffin pan. Bake 17-19 minutes. Remove from pan and let cool completely. Serve with Cranberry Butter.

Yield: 12 servings

Cranberry Butter

½ cup boiling water
¼ cup sweetened dried cranberries
1 cup unsalted butter, softened
3 tbsp. confectioners' sugar

In a small bowl, combine ½ cup boiling water and cranberries. Cover and let stand until softened, about 20 minutes. Drain cranberries and finely chop. In a medium bowl, combine cranberries, butter and confectioners' sugar, stirring well. Cover and refrigerator until firm.

Yield: 1 cup

Fruity Pebbles Breakfast Bread

1¼ cup granulated sugar
1 cup plain Greek yogurt
½ cup unsweetened applesauce
3 large eggs
½ tsp. vanilla
½ tsp. salt
2 tsp. baking powder
1½ cups all-purpose flour
2 cups Fruity Pebbles cereal

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix sugar, yogurt, eggs, applesauce and vanilla until smooth. Add salt, baking powder and flour. Gently fold in cereal. Spray a loaf pan well with non-stick cooking spray. Pour batter into pan and sprinkle about a handful of cereal on top of the batter. Bake for 45 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Yield: 6 servings

Hummingbird Cake Quick Bread

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup granulated sugar
½ cup sweetened flaked coconut, toasted
½ cup toasted pecans, chopped
1½ tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. baking soda
¼ tsp. ground nutmeg
¼ tsp. ground allspice
¼ tsp. ground ginger
1 (8 oz.) can crushed pineapple, drained
1 cup mashed ripe banana
¾ cup canola oil
2 large egg
1 tsp. vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 9 inch loaf pan with baking spray with flour. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, coconut, pecans, baking powder, cinnamon, baking soda, salt, nutmeg, allspice and ginger. Make a well in the center of dry ingredients. In a medium bowl, combine pineapple, bananas, oil, eggs, and vanilla. Add to dry ingredients, stirring just until moistened. Spoon into prepared pan. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, about 55 minutes. Let cool in pan 10 minutes. Run a knife around edges of loaf; remove from pan and let cool completely on a wire rack. Drizzle with Cream Cheese Glaze; garnish with ground cinnamon.

Cream Cheese Glaze

⅔ cup confectioners' sugar
¼ cup cream cheese, softened
¼ tsp. vanilla extract
1 tbsp. whole milk
1-2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice

In a small bowl, whisk together first 4 ingredients and enough lemon juice until glaze reaches desired consistency. Drizzle over quick bread.

Yield: 1 loaf

Cherry Cola Bread

1 cup unsalted butter, softened
1 cup granulated sugar
5 large eggs
3 cups all-purpose flour
½ tsp. baking powder
¼ tsp. baking soda
¼ tsp. salt
1½ cups cola, divided
1 cup maraschino cherries, drained and halved
1 cup confectioners' sugar

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Spray 2 (10 inch) loaf pans with baking spray with flour. In a large bowl, beat butter and granulated sugar with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, 3-4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. In a large bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. With mixer on low speed, add flour mixture to butter mixture in thirds, alternating with 1¼ cup cola (beginning and ending with flour mixture) beating just until combined after each addition. Stir in cherries. Pour batter into prepared pans. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 1 hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes. Let cool in pans 10 minutes. Remove from pans and let cool completely on a wire rack. Place confectioners' sugar in a medium bowl. Gradually add remaining ¼ cup cola, whisking to combine. Pour over cooled loaves.

Yield: 2 (10 inch) loaves)

Rebecca's Apple Fritter Casserole

Apple Mixture:

6 Granny Smith apples, peeled and chopped
½ stick unsalted butter
1 packed cup light brown sugar
1 tsp. (rounded) corn starch
2 tbsp. warm water

Fritter Mixture:

6 cooked large croissants, cut into chunks
½ cup heavy cream
1 cup apple butter
3 eggs
¼ tsp ground cinnamon

Glaze:

1 cup confectioners' sugar
4-5 tbsp. heavy cream

Melt butter in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add brown sugar and apples and stir until incorporated. Cook for 5-6 minutes, stirring occasionally. In a small cup, mix cornstarch and warm water. Add cornstarch mixture to apple mixture and cook for 5 more minutes. Remove from heat when the liquid is a thicker syrup consistency. Preheat oven to 375. Spray 9x13 casserole dish with non-stick spray. In a large bowl, whisk together the heavy cream, apple butter, eggs, and cinnamon. Fold in the cubed croissants. Pour mixture into casserole dish and arrange in an even layer. Top with the apple mixture. Gently press down top with a wooden spoon or spatula. Bake at 375 degrees for 30 minutes. Casserole should be slightly browned on top. While casserole is baking, make the glaze. Whisk together the confectioners' sugar and heavy cream until smooth. Drizzle over baked casserole. Serve warm and Enjoy!

Yield: 10 servings

Soups & Salads

Tomato Basil Soup

4 medium carrots, finely chopped
1 large onion, finely chopped
¼ cup unsalted butter, cubed
1 (49 oz.) can reduced sodium chicken broth or
6 cups vegetable broth, divided
1 (29 oz.) can tomato puree
5 tsp. dried basil
1½ tsp. granulated sugar
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. white pepper
1 (12 oz.) can fat-free evaporated milk

In a Dutch oven, cook carrots and onion in butter over medium-low heat for 30 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and cool slightly. In a blender, place ½ broth and cooled vegetables; cover and process until blended. Return to Dutch oven. Stir in the tomato puree, basil, sugar, salt, pepper and remaining broth. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered for 30 minutes. Reduce heat to low. Gradually stir in evaporated milk; heat through (do not boil).

Yield: 6 servings

Spinach-Tomato Salad

1 (8 oz.) pkg. spinach salad mix
2 medium tomatoes cut into thin wedges
½ medium cucumber, thinly sliced
½ small onion, thinly sliced
1 (14-16 oz.) can low-sodium kidney or garbanzo beans, drained

Toss spinach, croutons and bacon from salad bag with tomatoes, cucumber, onion and beans in a medium serving bowl. Serve with Tomato Basil Dressing.

Tomato Basil Dressing

½ cup tomato juice
3 tbsp. red wine vinegar
2 tbsp. scallions, chopped
1 tbsp. granulated sugar
1 tbsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. dried oregano
½ tsp. dried basil leaves

Combine all ingredients in a jar with a tight-fitting lid. Cover and shake vigorously. Serve over spinach salad.

Yield: 4 servings

Orange-Berry Salad

½ cup ranch salad dressing
2 tbsp. orange juice
1 tsp. grated orange peel
½ cup heavy cream, whipped
1 (11 oz.) can mandarin orange segments
2 (3 oz.) pkg. raspberry gelatin
1 (16 oz.) can whole-berry cranberry sauce
½ cup walnut pieces
Mint sprigs
Whole fresh strawberries and raspberries

In a large bowl, whisk together salad dressing, orange juice and peel. Fold in whipped cream; cover and refrigerate. Drain oranges, reserving juice. Add water to juice to measure 3 cups; pour into a large saucepan and bring to a boil. Stir in gelatin until dissolved. Cover and refrigerate until partially set. Fold orange segments, cranberry sauce and walnuts into gelatin. Pour into a lightly oiled 6 cup ring mold. Cover and refrigerate until firm; unmold. Garnish with mint and raspberries. Serve with chilled dressing.

Yield: 8 servings

Broccoli Pasta Salad

1 (6 oz.) jar marinated artichoke hearts, chopped
1 large bunch fresh broccoli, cut into flowerets
½ cup pimento-stuffed olives, chopped
1 small bunch green onions, chopped
4 boiled eggs, chopped
3 cups cooked fancy pasta
½ lb. fresh mushrooms, sliced
1 (8 oz.) can water chestnuts, sliced
1 egg
2 tbsp. Parmesan cheese, grated
1 whole clove garlic crushed
½ tsp. Dijon mustard
Salt and pepper to taste
½ cup vegetable oil
½ cup lemon juice

Toss artichoke hearts, broccoli, olives, onions, boiled eggs, pasta, mushrooms and water chestnuts. Set aside. In a food processor, mix the remaining ingredients. Pour over pasta mixture, toss. Chill 2-3 hours before servings.

Yield: 12 servings

Cheddar Broccoli Soup

1 tbsp. olive oil
½ cup chopped celery
½ cup chopped carrot
½ cup chopped onion
½ tsp. dried thyme leaves, crushed
2 (14½ oz.) cans chicken both
1 (17 oz.) jar Cheddar cheese pasta sauce
1 (10 oz.) box frozen, chopped broccoli, thawed and drained

In a 3 quart saucepan, heat oil over medium heat and cook celery, carrot, onion and thyme 3 minutes or until vegetables are almost tender. Add chicken broth and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce to medium and simmer uncovered 10 minutes. In a food processor, puree vegetables until smooth; return to saucepan. Stir in cheese sauce and broccoli. Cook 10 minutes.

Yield: 6 servings

Turkey Sausage Jambalaya

2 pkgs. turkey hot Italian sausage
2 tbsp. vegetable oil
2 cups chopped onion
⅓ cup chopped green bell pepper
⅓ cup chopped red bell pepper
⅓ cup chopped celery
4-6 cloves garlic, minced
4 cups chopped tomato
¼ to ½ tsp. cayenne pepper
¼ tsp. ground thyme
2 (14½ oz.) cans chicken broth
2 cups uncooked long grain rice
⅓ cup chopped fresh parsley
Salt and black pepper

Heat oil in large skillet, brown turkey sausage, turning occasionally. Add onion, bell peppers, celery and garlic. Cook and stir 3-5 minutes. Stir in tomato, cayenne pepper, thyme and chicken broth. Bring to a boil. Stir in rice; cover. Reduce to low; simmer for 20 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in parsley. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Yield: 10 servings

Tropical Slaw

¾ cups packaged coleslaw
¼ cup chopped fresh mango
½ cup chopped fresh pineapple
2 tbsp. light mayonnaise
¼ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. black pepper
1 tbsp. finely chopped fresh cilantro

Combine first 6 ingredients in a large bowl; toss well. Chill 15 minutes and add cilantro.

Yield: 6 servings

Peaches & Cream Gelatin Salad

- 1 (29 oz.) can peaches in own juice, drained reserving juice
- ½ cup fat-free cream cheese
- ½ cup fat-free sour cream
- ¼ cup sugar or granulated sugar substitute
- 1 (3 oz.) pkg. peach gelatin, dry

In a food processor, combine ½ can drained peaches, cream cheese, sour cream and sugar. Blend until smooth. Add the other ½ can of peaches (saving 4-5 slices for garnish). Blend until smooth. Heat 1 cup of reserved juice until almost boiling. Remove from heat and stir in gelatin until dissolved. Cool slightly and combine with cream cheese mixture. Cover and refrigerate about 3 hours or until chilled.

Yield: 6 servings

Warm Cranapple Salad

- 1 (16 oz.) can whole berry cranberry sauce
- 1 large apple (about 1 cup) peeled and chopped into ¼ inch pieces
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 cup miniature marshmallows
- 1 tbsp. finely chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray a 1-quart casserole dish with non-stick cooking spray. Mix cranberry sauce, chopped apple and cinnamon together. Pour into prepared casserole dish. Arrange marshmallows evenly on top. Bake at 400 degrees for 7-10- minutes until marshmallows are toasty golden brown. Sprinkle chopped walnuts on top. Serve.

Yield: 6 servings

Corn and Sweet Potato Chowder

- 1 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 celery stalk, finely chopped
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 tbsp. tomato paste
- 2 sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 2 red potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1½ cups fresh or frozen corn kernels
- 2 cups milk
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste

In a large pot, heat the butter over medium heat. Add the onion, celery. Cook until the vegetables are tender, 5-7 minutes. Add the tomato paste and thyme and cook for 1 minute. Add the sweet potatoes and red potatoes, chicken broth and salt. Simmer until the potatoes are tender, about 25 minutes. Add the corn and simmer 5 more minutes. Pour in the milk and cook until hot. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Yield: 6 servings

Tropical Passion Fruit Salad

- ¾ cup fat-free sour cream
- 1 tbsp. sugar or granulated sugar substitute
- 1 tsp. coconut extract
- 1 (15¼ oz.) can tropical fruit in light syrup, drained
- 1 (8 oz.) container fat-free cottage cheese
- 1 small banana, cut into ¼ inch slices

Mix sour cream, sugar, and coconut extract together in a serving bowl. Once well mixed, add drained fruit, cottage cheese and banana slices. Gently stir until well mixed. Serve chilled.

Yield: 6 servings

Throneberry's Taco Soup

2 lbs. ground beef
1 medium onion, diced
2-4 tbsp. (rounded) taco seasoning
2 (15 oz.) cans whole kernel corn
1 (15 oz.) can kidney beans
1 (15 oz.) can black beans
1 (15 oz.) can pinto beans
1 (28 oz.) can diced tomatoes
1 packet ranch seasoning

Brown ground beef and onion in large stock pot with 2 tbsp. taco seasoning. Add corn, beans, tomatoes, ranch seasoning and 1 more tbsp. taco seasoning. Stir well. Bring to a Boil, and then allow simmering on low for at least an hour. Can also allow to simmer in crockpot for 4 hours on high. For an extra kick, add the 4th tbsp. of taco seasoning.

Yield: 10-12 servings

Homemade Taco Seasoning

½ cup chili powder
½ cup cumin
½ cup oregano
½ garlic powder
¼ cup onion powder
¼ cup minced onion
1-4 tbsp. cayenne pepper (depending on how spicy you want it)
4-6 tbsp. sea salt

Mix all ingredients in a medium bowl. Store in an airtight jar.

Yield: 6-8 servings

Vegetable Beef Soup

2 (14 oz.) cans vegetable broth
2 cups water
5 small potatoes, peeled and diced
½ head of cabbage, chopped
1½ lbs. ground beef
1 small onion, diced
¼ cup diced celery
¼ cup chopped green bell pepper
1 tbsp. minced garlic
2 (11.5 oz.) cans tomato-vegetable juice cocktail
1 (14.5 oz.) can Italian style diced tomatoes
½ (16 oz.) pkg. frozen mixed vegetables
1 cup frozen cut okra
1 cup frozen lima beans
2 cubes beef bouillon, crumbled
2 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
1 tbsp. celery seed
1 tbsp. bacon grease
Salt and pepper to taste

Pour 1 can vegetable broth and water into a large pot. Place potatoes and cabbage into pot, and bring to a boil. Cook 10 minutes or until potatoes are tender but firm. Place the beef in a skillet over medium heat and cook until evenly brown. Drain grease and mix beef into pot. Stir in onion, celery, green bell pepper and garlic into skillet. Cook until tender, then mix into pot. Pour remaining broth and tomato-vegetable juice into pot. Mix in tomatoes, frozen vegetables, okra, lima beans, beef bouillon, Worcestershire sauce, celery seed and bacon grease. Season with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce to low and simmer 2 hours.

Yield 10 servings

Side Dishes

Green Beans with Mushrooms and Bacon

2 lbs. tiny green beans
8 slices bacon
3 cups shitake mushroom, sliced
¼ cup shallots, chopped
¼ - ½ tsp. dried crushed red pepper
½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
¼ tsp. salt

Cook beans in boiling water to cover in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat 3 minutes or until crisp-tender; drain. Plunge into ice water to stop the cooking process; drain. Cook bacon in a large skillet over medium-low heat 8-10 minutes or until crisp; remove bacon and drain on paper towels, reserving 1½ tbsp. dripping in skillet. Crumble bacon. Sauté mushrooms and shallots in hot drippings over medium-high heat 5 minutes or until shallots are tender. Add green beans and crushed red pepper; sauté 1-2 minutes or until thoroughly heated; stir in crumbled bacon, black pepper and salt.

Yield: 8 servings

Coconut-Pecan Sweet Potatoes

4 lbs. sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
½ cup chopped pecans
½ cup flaked coconut
½ cup granulated sugar
¼ cup packed light brown sugar
¼ cup reduced fat butter, melted
½ tsp. ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. salt
½ tsp. coconut extract
½ tsp. vanilla extract

Place sweet potatoes in a 5 qt. slow cooker coated with cooking spray. Combine the pecans, coconut, sugar, brown sugar, butter, cinnamon and salt; sprinkle over potatoes. Cover and cook on low for 4 hours or until potatoes are tender. Stir in extracts.

Yield: 12 servings

Barry's Red Beans and Rice

1 (16 oz.) pkg. red kidney beans
1 lb. cubed ham
1 (12 oz.) pkg. Andouille sausage
1 (12 oz.) pkg. smoked sausage
1 large onion, diced
1 green bell pepper, diced
3 stalks celery, chopped
4 cloves of garlic, minced
2 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
Tabasco sauce to taste
3 to 4 tbsp. Cajun seasoning
Chicken stock
3 cups cooked white rice

Soak beans overnight and then begin to prepare according to package instructions. Sauté ham and both sausages in oil. Add one tablespoon Cajun seasoning. Remove with slotted spoon. Sauté onions, green bell pepper, celery, and one tablespoon Cajun seasoning in left over oil until soft, adding more oil if necessary. Add garlic halfway through cooking. With 45 minutes left to cook the beans, add ham, sausage, vegetable mixture, Worcestershire sauce, and hot sauce with the final tablespoon of Cajun seasoning to the beans. If the beans and sauce look dry as you finish cooking, add chicken stock to the sauce. Serve over cooked rice when the beans are tender.

Yield: Serves 10

Cranberry Beets

1 (16 oz.) can small whole beets, undrained
1 (8 oz.) can whole berry cranberry sauce
1 tbsp. orange peel, grated
1 tbsp. cornstarch
1 tbsp. cold water

Put beets and cranberry sauce into saucepan; heat until blended. Stir in orange peel, then cornstarch which has been dissolved in cold water. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until thickened.

Yield: 6 servings

Asparagus with Dill Sauce

1 lb. fresh asparagus, trimmed
½ cup sour cream
2 tsp. milk
½ tsp. dill weed
¼ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. pepper

Place asparagus in a steamer basket; place in a large saucepan over 1 inch of water. Bring to a boil; cover and steam for 3-5 minutes or until crisp-tender. Meanwhile, in a small microwave safe bowl, combine the remaining ingredients. Microwave on high for 30-60 seconds or until heated through. Serve with asparagus.

Yield: 4 servings

Zucchini Parmesan

½ -1 tsp. minced garlic
1 tbsp. olive oil
4 medium zucchini, cut into ¼ inch slices
1 (14½ oz.) can Italian diced tomatoes, undrained
1 tsp. seasoned salt
¼ tsp. pepper
¼ cup Parmesan cheese

In a large skillet, sauté garlic in oil. Add zucchini and stir 4-5 minutes or until crisp tender. Stir in the tomatoes, seasoned salt and pepper. Simmer, uncovered, for 9-10 minutes or until liquid is absorbed and mixture is heated through. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Serve with a slotted spoon.

Yield: 6 servings

Parmesan Roasted Carrots

8 large carrots cut diagonally into ¼ slices
4 tbsp. unsweetened applesauce
2 tbsp. finely chopped onion
½ tsp. salt
Dash paprika
Pepper to taste
2 tbsp. Parmesan cheese

In a small bowl, combine the first six ingredients. Transfer to a baking dish coated with cooking spray. Bake at 425 degrees for 10-15 minutes or until golden brown. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Serve immediately.

Yield: 4 servings

Broccoli Parmesan

¼ cup fat-free buttery spread (found in dairy section)
½ tsp. garlic salt, optional
1 (16 oz.) pkg. frozen broccoli cuts
¼ cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Stir butter spread, garlic salt, and broccoli in a microwave safe bowl. Cover. Cook on high for 4 minutes. Stir. Cook 4 more minutes on high. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Let sit for 2 minutes. Serve hot.

Yield: 5 servings

Special Rice Casserole

1 cup long grain rice, uncooked
1 (15½ oz.) can chicken broth
Water
1 lb. Monterey Jack cheese, grated
1 (16 oz.) carton sour cream
½ cup creamy Italian dressing
1 (4 oz.) can green chili peppers, chopped
1 (8 oz.) can water chestnuts, sliced and drained

Combine rice, chicken broth, plus enough water to make 2 cups liquid. Cook rice until tender. Add cheese, sour cream, dressing, chili peppers and water chestnuts; stir until well blended. Pour into a 9X13 inch baking dish. Bake uncovered, at 350 degrees for 25 minutes. Can be made the day before. Freezes well.

Yield: 12 servings

Entrees

Crispy Buttermilk Fried Chicken

- ¼ cup buttermilk
- 4 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp. honey
- 2 lbs. skinless bone-in chicken thigh and drumsticks
- 1 cup dry breadcrumbs
- 1 tbsp. finely grated Parmesan cheese

Combine buttermilk, mustard and honey in a large zip-top bag. Mix well, and then add chicken. Seal and refrigerate 4-24 hours. Layer a large rimmed baking sheet with foil, then place one or two baking racks on top of the baking sheet. Combine breadcrumbs and Parmesan cheese on a large plate and mix well. Dredge chicken in bread crumb mixture, coating both sides, then place on a baking rack. Refrigerate 30 minutes. (this helps keep the coating on the chicken) Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place chicken in oven and bake 30-35 minutes, until chicken is cooked through and juices run clear. Remove from oven and let rest 4-5 minutes before servings.

Yield: 6 services

Chicken Pie with Fritos

- 12 tbsp. canola oil
- 1½ lbs. boneless, skinless chicken thighs cut into 1½ inch pieces
- Salt and pepper
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, diced
- 1 tbsp. chili powder
- 2 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 (7 oz.) can chopped fire-roasted green chilies
- 2 (15 oz.) cans white beans, drained and rinsed
- 2½ cups Fritos
- 2 cups shredded Monterey jack cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large heavy-bottomed pot, heat oil over medium-high.

Season chicken with salt and pepper and place in pan and cook until browned on both sides, about 3 minutes per side. Remove to a plate. Stir in onion, garlic, and chili powder and cook until tender, about 4 minutes. Return chicken to pot; stir in broth, green chilies and beans. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium and simmer 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add 1½ cups Fritos to a 2 quart baking dish. Top with chicken mixture, remaining Fritos and cheese. Bake 15 minutes. Serve with cilantro, avocado and sour cream, if desired.

Yield: 6 servings

Cheeseburger Sliders

- 2 lbs. ground chuck
- 2 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. pepper
- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- ½ white onion, diced
- 6 slices cheddar cheese
- 1 (12 pk.) dinner rolls or Hawaiian sweet rolls
- 2 tbsp. melted butter
- 1 tbsp. sesame seeds

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine the beef, salt, pepper, and garlic powder in a 9X13 baking tray, mixing thoroughly and pressing it in a flat, even layer. Bake for 20 minutes. Set aside the cooked beef and drain the liquid. Slice the rolls in half, lengthwise. Place the bottom half on the same 9X13 baking tray. Place the cooked beef layer on top of the rolls, followed by the onions and cheese. Place the remaining half of the rolls on top. Brush the top of the rolls with butter and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Bake for 20 minutes. Slice and serve.

Yield: 6 servings

Oven-Barbecued Beef Brisket

1 (3-4 lb.) beef brisket
1 (15 oz.) can tomato sauce
½ cup steak sauce
2 tbsp. firmly packed light brown sugar
1 tbsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. concentrated natural hickory seasoning
1 tsp. garlic powder
¼ tsp. liquid hot pepper seasoning
1 tbsp. all-purpose flour
2 tbsp. water

Place brisket, fat side up, in large roasting pan; set aside. Blend tomato sauce, steak sauce, sugar, lemon juice, hickory seasoning, garlic powder and hot pepper seasoning; pour over brisket. Cover with lid or foil. Bake at 350 degrees for 3 hours or until tender, basting occasionally. Place pan liquid in a large saucepan. Dissolve flour in water; add to pan liquid. Cook until thickened, stirring occasionally. Slice beef; serve with thickened sauce. Garnish as desired.

Yield: 4-6 servings

Sausage and Cheese Bake

1 (8 oz.) can refrigerated crescent dinner rolls
8 oz. sausage
2 cups Swiss cheese, shredded
4 eggs, beaten
¼ cup milk
2 tbsp. green pepper, chopped
½ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. pepper
¼ tsp. oregano

Line a 9X13 inch baking dish with crescent rolls. Crumble the uncooked sausage over the dough. Place the cheese over the sausage. Mix the remaining ingredients; pour over the cheese. Bake at 425 degrees for 20-25 minutes. Cut into squares. Serve immediately.

Yield: 6 servings

Chicken & Dumpling Casserole

2 lbs. chicken thighs, cooked and shredded
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup milk
2 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
1 (10½ oz.) can cream of chicken soup
1 cup chicken broth
¼ tsp. salt
½ tsp. black pepper

Place chicken in a pot and cover with water. Cover and cook over medium heat for 45 minutes. Remove chicken from pot and save the water, let cool. Shred the chicken and place in the bottom of an 11X7 inch baking dish. Whisk together the flour, milk and butter; pour over the chicken. Whisk together the broth, soup, salt and pepper; pour over casserole. DO NOT STIR. Bake at 350 degrees for 40-45 minutes. Let sit for a few minutes before serving.

Yield: 6 servings

Ground Beef Enchilada Casserole

1 lb. ground beef
1 dozen corn tortillas
1 (6 oz.) can chopped olives
1 (10½ oz.) can cream of chicken soup
1 (10½ oz.) can cream of mushroom soup
1 onion, chopped
1 lb. shredded Cheddar cheese
1 (4 oz.) can diced green chilies
1 (10½ oz.) can enchilada sauce
Garnishes: sour cream, salsa, guacamole

Brown ground beef with onion. Cut up tortillas into small sections. Mix everything together and place in a casserole dish. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Serve with sour cream, salsa and guacamole if desired.

Yield: 6 servings

Asian Steak Wraps

¼ cup lime juice
3 tbsp. honey
1 tbsp. reduced-sodium soy sauce
2 tsp. sesame oil
2 tsp. minced fresh gingerroot
1½ tsp. minced fresh cilantro
1 lb. beef top sirloin steak, cut into thin strips
¼ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. pepper
1 medium onion, halved and thinly sliced
1 large green pepper, julienned
1 large sweet red pepper, julienned
4 flour tortillas (8 inches) warmed
2 oz. reduced-fat cream cheese
2 tsp. sesame seeds, toasted

In a small bowl, combine the first six ingredients. Pour ¼ cup marinade into a large re-sealable plastic bag; add beef. Seal and turn to coat; refrigerate for 1 hour. Add salt and pepper to remaining marinade; cover and refrigerate. Drain beef and discard marinade. In a nonstick skillet or wok coated with cooking spray, stir fry beef until no longer pink; remove and keep warm. In the same pan, stir-fry onion and peppers until crisp-tender. Stir in reserved marinade. Return beef to pan; heat through. Spread tortillas with cream cheese, top with beef mixture and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Roll up.

Yield: 4 servings

Creamy Cinnamon Oatmeal Bake

3½ cups milk
1 large egg, lightly beaten
½ cup maple syrup
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
Pinch of salt
2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
1 apple, peeled cored and chopped
⅓ cup dried blueberries or raisins chopped
¼ cup slivered almonds

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a 9 inch square dish with cooking spray. In a medium bowl, whisk together the milk, egg, maple syrup, vanilla, cinnamon and salt. Stir in the oats, apple, and blueberries. Pour into prepared dish and bake for 20 minutes. Top with almonds and continue to bake until most of the liquid has been absorbed. 15-20 minutes, more. Top with almonds.

Yield: 6-8 servings

Spaghetti Pie

1 (8 oz.) pkg. spaghetti, cooked and drained
2 tbsp. unsalted butter
½ cup Parmesan cheese, grated
2 eggs, well beaten
1 cup cottage cheese
1 lb. ground beef
½ cup onion, chopped
¼ cup green pepper, chopped
1 (8oz.) can tomatoes, undrained and cut-up
1 (6 oz.) can tomato paste
1 tsp. sugar
1 tsp. oregano, crushed
½ tsp. garlic salt
½ cup Mozzarella cheese, shredded

Stir butter into hot spaghetti, Parmesan cheese and eggs. Form spaghetti mixture into a crust in a buttered 10 inch pie plate. Spread cottage cheese over bottom of spaghetti crust. Cook ground beef, onion and green pepper until vegetables are tender and meat is browned, drain. Stir in undrained tomatoes, tomato paste, sugar, oregano and garlic salt. Heat through. Place meat mixture into spaghetti crust. Bake uncovered, at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Sprinkle the mozzarella cheese on top. Bake 5 minutes longer or until cheese melts.

Yield: 6 servings

Desserts

Chocolate Caramel Cupcakes

1 (18¼ oz.) pkg. chocolate cake mix
24 caramels
¾ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
1 cup chopped walnuts
Chocolate frosting
Additional walnuts, optional

Prepare cake batter according to package directions. Fill 24 greased or paper lined muffin cups ¾ full; set aside. Bake at 350 degrees for 7-8 minutes or until top of cupcakes appears set. Gently press a caramel into each cupcake; sprinkle with chocolate chips and walnuts. Top with remaining batter. Bake 15-20 minutes longer or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes; remove from pans to wire racks to cool completely. Frost with chocolate frosting. Sprinkle with additional walnuts if desired.

Yield: 24 servings

Hazelnut Chocolate Cake

1¼ cups unsalted butter, softened
1½ cups granulated sugar
½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 tbsp. vanilla extract
5 large eggs
2½ cups all-purpose flour
¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1½ tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. baking powder
¼ tsp. salt
1½ cups buttermilk
½ cup sour cream
Chocolate Hazelnut frosting (recipe follows)
Garnish: toasted hazelnuts, chocolate chunks

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray 3 (9 inches) round cake pans with nonstick baking spray with flour. In a large bowl, beat butter, sugars and vanilla with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating well

after each addition. In a medium bowl, whisk together the next four ingredients. Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternating with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating until just combined after each addition. Stir in sour cream. Spoon batter into prepared pans. Bake 15-20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Let cool in pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans and let cool completely on wire racks.

Chocolate-Hazelnut Frosting

1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
½ cup unsalted butter, softened
1½ cups chocolate hazelnut spread
½ cup sour cream
5 cups confectioners' sugar

In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and butter with a mixer at medium speed until creamy. Beat in hazelnut spread and sour cream until combined. Reduce speed to low and gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until smooth. Spread frosting between layers and on top and sides of cake. Garnish with hazelnuts and chocolate chunks.

Yield: 16 servings

Cinnamon Blueberry Sauce

¼ cup granulated sugar substitute
2 tsp. cornstarch
2 cups frozen unsweetened blueberries
2 tbsp. lemon juice
¼ cup water
½ tsp. ground cinnamon

In a small saucepan, combine sugar substitute and cornstarch. Add blueberries, water, lemon juice and cinnamon. Cook and stir until mixture comes a boil. Reduce heat, simmer, uncovered for 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Serve on warm waffles, pancakes, ice cream or plain cake. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 1 cup

Strawberry Buttercream Cake

1 (18¼ oz.) pkg. white cake mix
1 (3 oz.) pkg. strawberry gelatin
4 large eggs
½ cup granulated sugar
½ cup finely chopped, fresh strawberries
½ cup milk
½ cup vegetable oil
½ cup all-purpose flour

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Beat cake mix, strawberry gelatin, eggs, sugar, chopped fresh strawberries, milk, vegetable oil and all-purpose flour at low speed with an electric mixer for 1 minute. Scrape down sides and beat at medium speed for 2 more minutes. Pour batter into 3 greased and floured 9 inch round cake pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 23 minutes. Let cool in pans on wire racks for 10 minutes. Remove from pans and cool completely.

Strawberry Buttercream Frosting

1 cup butter, softened
32 oz. confectioners' sugar, sifted
1 cup finely chopped, fresh strawberries

Beat butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until fluffy, (about 20 seconds). Add sugar and strawberries; beat at low speed until creamy. (Add more sugar if too thin or more strawberries if too thick.) Spread frosting between layers and on top and sides of cake. Serve immediately or chill for up to 1 week.

Yield: 16 servings

Golden Rum Cake

1 cup chopped walnuts
1 (18¼ oz.) pkg. yellow cake mix
1 (3.4 oz.) pkg. vanilla instant pudding
4 eggs
½ cup water
½ cup oil
½ cup dark rum
½ cup unsalted butter

Glaze:

¼ cup water
1 cup granulated sugar
½ cup dark rum

Preheat oven to 325 degrees and flour a 10 inch Bundt pan. Sprinkle chopped nuts evenly in prepared pan. In a large bowl, combine cake mix and pudding mix. Mix in eggs, ½ cup water oil, and ½ cup rum. Blend well. Pour batter over chopped nuts in the pan. Bake in the preheated oven for 60 minutes. Let sit for 10 minutes in pan, turn out onto serving plate. In a saucepan, combine butter with ¼ cup water and 1 cup sugar. Bring to a boil over medium heat and continue to boil for 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and stir in ½ cup rum. Brush glaze over top and sides of cake.

Yield: 16 servings

Chocolate Banana Walnut Bread Pudding

1 small loaf stale bread, sliced ½ thick
1¼ cups milk
¼ cup light sour cream
½ cup packed light brown sugar, plus 1 tbsp.
3 large eggs
½ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
½ cup semisweet chocolate chips
2 bananas, peeled and sliced
½ cup walnuts, chopped

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease 8 inch square baking dish with cooking spray. Place bread in a large bowl. In a medium bowl whisk together milk, sour cream ½ cup of sugar, eggs and nutmeg. Add the milk mixture to the bread, stirring gently to combine. Let stand for 15 minutes. Spoon mixture into the prepared baking dish. Evenly sprinkle with chocolate chips and slide the banana slices in between the bread slices. Top with walnuts and sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon sugar. Bake for 55 minutes to 1 hour, until the center is set.

Yield: 6-8 servings

Santa's Red Velvet Pie with Chocolate Frosting

1 (18¼ oz.) box red velvet cake mix
3 eggs
½ cup oil
1 cup water
Two pre-made pie crusts
½ cup unsalted butter
12 oz. semisweet chocolate chips
1 can sweetened condensed milk

Mix cake according to package directions. Divide batter evenly into pie crusts. Bake 30-35 minutes at 350 degrees, or until a tooth pick comes out clean. Cool. In a small sauce pan on medium heat, melt 10 ounces of chocolate with butter and sweetened condensed milk. Frost cake and sprinkle with remaining chocolate chips.

Yield 16 servings

Chocolate Chess Pie

1 prepared pie crust
1 cup granulated sugar
½ cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
3 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder
2 tbsp. all-purpose flour
¼ tsp. salt
½ cup evaporated milk
¼ cup unsalted butter, softened
1 tsp. vanilla extract
3 large eggs
½ cup dark chocolate morsels
Garnish: sweetened whipped cream, chocolate shavings

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, combine sugars, cocoa, flour and salt. Add milk, butter, vanilla and eggs; stir with a whisk. Sprinkle chocolate morsels in bottom of crust; pour cocoa mixture over chocolate morsels. Bake until crust is golden brown and filling is set, about 45 minutes. Let cool completely on wire rack. Garnish with whipped cream and chocolate shavings.

Yield: 8 servings

Brownie Chocolate Chip Cheesecake

1 (19¼ or 22) oz. pkg. fudge brownie mix
3 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
3 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla extract
½ cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease bottom only of a 9 inch spring form pan. Prepare brownie mix according to package directions for chewy brownies. Spread evenly in prepared pan. Bake 35 minutes or until set. In a large bowl, beat cream cheese until fluffy. Gradually beat in sweetened condensed milk until smooth. Add eggs and vanilla; mix well. Stir in chocolate chips. Pour into baked crust. Reduce oven temperature to 300 degrees. Bake 50 minutes or until set. Cool. Chill thoroughly. Remove side of spring form pan. Garnish as desired. Store leftovers in refrigerator.

Yield: 1 (9inch) cheesecake

Flourless Gluten Free Chocolate Fudge Cake

6 large eggs, separated
12 oz. bittersweet chocolate, chopped
9 tbsp. unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
½ cup granulated sugar

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Grease a 9 inch springform pan with cooking spray. Line the bottom with parchment paper and spray the top of the paper. With a mixer, beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form. In a medium microwave safe bowl, melt chocolate and butter at 30 second intervals, stirring in between, until smooth. Whisk in the sugar until combined. Allow chocolate mixture to cool, Whisk the egg yolks into the chocolate mixture, one at a time. Gently fold the whipped egg whites into the chocolate mixture in batches. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 40 minutes or until the cake begins to pull away from the sides of pan. Let the cake cool for 1 hour before gently releasing it from the spring form pan.

Yield: 8-10 servings

Cookies & Bars

Spiced Spritz Cookies

1 cup unsalted butter, softened
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 large egg
1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
¾ tsp. ground cinnamon
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. ground cardamom
½ tsp. ground ginger
¼ tsp. ground cloves
¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Beat butter and confectioners' sugar at medium speed with an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine flour and next 6 ingredients; gradually add to butter mixture, beating at low speed until blended. Use a cookie press to shape dough into desired shapes, following manufacturer's instructions. Place on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375 for 10-12 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool on baking sheets for 5 minutes; transfer to wire racks, and cool completely (about 15 minutes).

Yield: 2 dozen

Gluten-Free Almond Cookies

1 cup unsalted butter, softened
1 cup confectioners' sugar, divided
2 cups rice flour
1 tsp. vanilla extract
¾ cup chopped almonds

Cream butter and ½ cup confectioners' sugar. Add flour and vanilla extract. Mix well. Stir in almonds. Shape into 1 inch balls. Place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350 degrees for 13-16 minutes or until the bottoms are golden brown. Cool for 2 minutes on wire racks. Let cool completely and roll each cookie in remaining confectioners' sugar.

Yield: 4 dozen

Layered Fruitcake Bars

Crust:

1 cup all-purpose flour
¼ cup sugar
⅛ tsp. salt
½ cup cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

Filing:

1 cup chopped candied cherries
1 cup golden raisins
½ cup chopped apricots
½ cup chopped pitted dates
1½ cups coarsely chopped pecans
¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
3 tbsp. all-purpose flour
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. ground cloves
¾ cup light corn syrup
½ tsp. vanilla extract
2 large eggs

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line an 8 inch square baking pan with foil, allowing ends to extend over edges of pan. Lightly spray foil with baking spray with flour. For crust; in the work bowl of a food processor, combine flour, sugar and salt; pulse 2 times. Add butter; pulse 4-5 times until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Using the bottom of a measuring cup, press mixture into the bottom of prepared pan. Bake until crust browns slightly, about 25 minutes. Let cool 10 minutes on a wire rack. For filling; sprinkle cherries, raisins, apricots, and dates over crust; top with pecans. In a medium bowl combine brown sugar, flour, salt, cinnamon and cloves. Whisk in syrup, vanilla and eggs; pour over pecans. Bake until filling is set, about 45 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack, about 4 hours. Remove from pan using edges of foil as handles. Cut into bars. Store in refrigerator up to 5 days.

Yield: 16 bars

Hummingbird Cookies

½ cup unsalted butter, softened
½ cup granulated sugar
½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 large egg
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
½ tsp. salt
¼ tsp ground ginger
⅛ tsp. ground nutmeg
⅛ tsp. ground allspice
⅔ cup crushed pineapple, drained
2 tbsp. reserved pineapple juice
½ cup mashed ripe banana
1 tsp. vanilla extract
3 cups sweetened flaked coconut
1 cup confectioners' sugar

In a large bowl, beat butter and sugars with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy. Add egg; beat well. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, cinnamon, salt, ginger, nutmeg and allspice. Add flour mixture, pineapple, banana, and vanilla to butter mixture, beating just until combined. Cover and refrigerate until firm, about 2 hours. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Shape dough into 1 inch balls. Roll in coconut. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Bake until lightly browned around edges, about 17 minutes. Let cool completely on wire racks. In a small, bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and pineapple juice. Drizzle over cookies.

Yield: 30 cookies

Coconut Hedgehog Cookies

1 cup finely chopped walnuts
½ cup finely chopped dates
½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 cup flaked coconut, divided
1 egg

Combine walnuts, dates and brown sugar. Add ½ cup coconut and egg. Mix well. Shape into 1 inch balls. Roll in remaining coconut. Place on greased baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 12-13 minutes or until lightly browned.

Yield: 1½ dozen

Wreath Macaroons

14 oz. sweetened shredded coconut
2 large egg whites
½ cup plus 2 tsp. granulated sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
Parchment paper
Finely chopped candied cherries

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine first 4 ingredients. Drop by heaping tablespoonfuls onto 3 parchment paper lined baking sheets, about 12 per sheet. Make a hole in the center of each cookie; pinch each cookie into a wreath shape, add cherries. Bake 2 baking sheets at 350 for 14 minutes. Rotate pans front to back; bake 2 more minutes or until coconut begins to brown. Transfer parchment paper with cookies to wire racks; cool completely. Repeat with remaining baking sheet.

Yield: 36 cookies

Gluten-Free Gems

¾ cup unsalted butter, softened
½ cup granulated sugar
1 egg yolk
1½ cups gluten free flour
Any favor jelly

Cream butter and sugar. Add egg yolk; mix well. Stir in flour. Refrigerate for an hour. Roll dough into 1 inch balls. Place 2 inches apart on greased baking sheets. Make indentions with a spoon in the center of each cookie fill indentions with jelly. Bake at 350 degrees for 13-15 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Dust cookies with confectioners' sugar if desired.

Yield: 2 dozen

Pumpkin Snickerdoodles

1 cup solid shortening
1 cup granulated sugar
½ cup light brown sugar
¼ cup pumpkin puree
1 large egg
2 tsp. vanilla extract
3¾ cups all-purpose flour
1½ tsp. baking powder
1½ tsp. ground cinnamon
1 tsp. cream of tartar
1 tsp. salt
¼ tsp. ground nutmeg

Topping:

½ cup granulated sugar
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. allspice

Beat shortening, 1 cup of granulated sugar and light brown sugar together in a bowl until light and fluffy. Stir in pumpkin puree; beat in eggs and vanilla extract. Whisk flour, baking powder ½ teaspoons cinnamon, cream of tartar, salt and nutmeg together in a bowl. Gradually stir flour mixture into pumpkin mixture until dough is just combined. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate until chilled, at least 1 hour. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheet with parchment paper. Whisk ½ cup granulated sugar, 1 teaspoon cinnamon and allspice together in a small bowl. Roll dough into 1 inch balls; roll in cinnamon-sugar mixture and place 2 inches apart on prepared baking sheets. Slightly flatten each ball with a flat-bottomed glass. Bake in the preheated oven until golden and set, 12-13 minutes. Cool on the baking sheet for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

Yield: 24 servings

Red Velvet Crinkle Cookies

8 tbsp. unsalted butter, softened
1 cup granulated sugar
½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
2 large eggs
2 tsp. red food coloring
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 (4 oz.) bar semisweet chocolate, melted and cooled
2 cups all-purpose flour
¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
2 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. kosher salt
¼ tsp. baking soda
½ cup confectioners' sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheets with parchment paper. In a large bowl, beat butter and sugars at medium speed. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in food coloring, vanilla and melted chocolate. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, baking powder, salt and baking soda. Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined. Cover and refrigerate 30 minutes. Shape dough into 1 inch balls; roll balls in confectioners' sugar. Place at least 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Bake until centers are set, 8-10 minutes. Let cool completely on pans. Store in an airtight container up to 4 days.

Yield: 24 balls

Frosty No Bake Cookies

1 (24 oz.) pkg. vanilla bark
8 oz. crunchy peanut butter
2 cups miniature marshmallows
2 cups crispy rice cereal
3 cups toasted oat cereal

Melt bark and stir in peanut butter until blended. Add remaining ingredients and drop by heaping teaspoons on wax paper. Let stand until firm about 1 hour. Store in airtight container.

Yield: 24 candies

Mix & Match Cereal Bars

3 tbsp. unsalted butter
1 (10 oz.) bag marshmallows
Cereals and other ingredients listed below:

In a large saucepan, melt 3 tablespoons butter over medium heat. Stir in marshmallows until melted. Remove from heat and stir in cereal until well coated. Add mix-ins. Using a buttered spatula or clean, damp hands, press mixture evenly into a 9X13 inch pan coated with cooking spray. Add topping. Let cool. Cut into 2 inch squares.

Yield: 2 dozen

Over the Rainbow

Cereal: 7 cups Fruit Loops
Mix-in: 1 cup crushed Pretzels
Topping: ½ cup mini chocolate chips

PB & Honey

Cereal: 7 cups Honey Smacks
Mix-in: 1 cup white chocolate chips
Topping: ¼ cup Reese's Pieces

Trail Mix

Cereal: 7 cups Cheerios
Mix-in: 1 cup dried cranberries
1 cup slivered almonds
Topping: drizzle with chocolate syrup (2 tbsp.)

Carnival Bars

Cereal: 7 cups Corn Pops
mix-in: 1 tsp. cinnamon
1 cup unsweetened coconut flakes
1 cup peanuts
Topping: ¼ cup rainbow sprinkles

Reindeer Gingersnaps

1 (14 ½ oz.) pkg. gingerbread mix
1 tsp. meringue powder
½ tsp. hot water
1 (12 oz.) container ready to spread fluffy white frosting
Parchment paper
32 miniature candy canes
32 licorice candies
16 sour cherry candies

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Prepare gingerbread dough according to package directions for gingersnap cookies. Roll dough out on a lightly floured surface, and cut into 3½ inch ovals, using an egg-shaped or oval cookie cutter. Place 2 inch apart on parchment paper-lined baking sheets. Bake at 375 degrees for 8-10 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Remove to wire rack, and let cool 30 minutes. Stir together meringue powder and hot water until combined; stir in frosting. Spoon frosting mixture into a zip-top plastic bag; snip off 1 corner of bag to make a small hole. Pipe 1 dot of frosting mixture at top of 1 cookie; press straight ends of candy canes into piped dot to form antlers. Pipe 2 large frosting ovals to form eyes. Pipe 1 dot of frosting at bottom of cookies; press 1 cherry candy in dot to form a nose. Repeat procedure with remaining cookies. Let stand 24 hours to dry.

Yield: 16 cookies

Peanut Butter Reindeer Cookies

1 pouch peanut butter cookie mix
3 tbsp. canola oil
1 tbsp. water
1 egg
2 tsp. granulated sugar
72 semisweet chocolate chips
12 star-shaped Christmas pretzels

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a bowl, mix cookies as directed on package, using oil, water and egg. Shape dough into 24 (1¼ inch) balls. On ungreased cookie sheets, place balls 2 inches apart. Dip bottom of drinking glass in sugar; press each ball until ½ inch thickness. Pinch bottom edge of each cookie to form a longer point. At point of each cookie, place 1 chocolate chip for nose; press down slightly. With small sharp knife, cut star points from Christmas pretzels to form 48 small V-shaped pretzels, (if using pretzels sticks, cut into quarters). Press 2 pretzels pieces into top of each cookie for antlers. Bake 9-11 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Remove from cookie sheets to cooling racks. Yield: 2 dozen

Russian Tea Cakes

1 cup unsalted butter, softened
½ cup confectioners' sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 egg
2¼ cups Bisquick Gluten Free mix
¾ cup finely chopped nuts
⅓ cup confectioners' sugar

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a large bowl, mix butter, ½ cup confections' sugar, vanilla extract and egg. Stir in Bisquick mix and nuts until dough holds together. Shape into 48 (1 inch) balls. On ungreased cookie sheets, place balls 1 inch apart. Bake 9-11 minutes or until set but not brown. Immediately remove from cookie sheet to cooling racks. Cool slightly. Roll warm cookies in confectioners' sugar; place on cooling racks to cool completely. Roll in confectioners' sugar again.

Yield: 4 doz.

Holiday House Cookies

1 pouch gingerbread cookie mix
½ cup unsalted butter, softened
1 tbsp. water
1 egg
1 (1 lb.) container creamy white ready to spread frosting
Assorted small candies

Heat oven to 375 degrees. In a medium bowl, stir cookie mix, butter and egg until dough forms. Divide dough in half. On a floured surface, roll half of dough at a time into a 9X6 inch rectangle. Cut rectangle into 6 (3 inch) squares. Place 4 squares on ungreased cookie sheet. Cut remaining 2 squares diagonally in half to form 4 triangles. Place 1 triangle on one side of each square for roof; press dough to seal. Bake 8-11 minutes or until set. Cool 5 minutes. Remove from cookie sheet to cooling rack. Cool completely, about 15 minutes. Decorate with frosting and candies.

Yield: 8 large cookies

Santa's Buster Brownies

⅓ cup canola oil
2 cups granulated sugar
⅓ cup corn syrup
3 eggs, slightly beaten
2 tsp. vanilla extract
½ cup cocoa
1½ cups all-purpose flour
½ tsp. salt
1 tsp. baking powder
1 cup chopped pecans

Frosting:

2 cups confectioners' sugar
⅓ cup cocoa
1 stick butter, melted
1 tbsp. milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a mixing bowl, beat oil, sugar, corn syrup, eggs and vanilla. Add cocoa, flour, salt and baking powder and beat well. Stir in chopped pecans. Bake in a greased/floured 9X13 inch baking pan for 35 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool. Prepare frosting by mixing confectioners' sugar, cocoa, butter, milk and vanilla. Spread over cool brownies.

Yield: 24 servings

Royal Icing

1 large egg white
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
Food coloring, optional

In a large bowl, beat egg white, lemon juice and sugar with a mixer for 8 minutes or until thick enough to hold its shape, add extra sugar if needed. The icing can be covered and refrigerated up to 4 days.

Yield: icing for 6 dozen cookies

Coffee Bars

Bars:

½ cup unsalted butter
2 cups light brown sugar
2 eggs
1 cup liquid coffee
3 cups all-purpose flour
½ tsp. baking soda
½ tsp. salt
2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 cups chopped walnuts
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Frosting:

1½ cups confectioners' sugar
2 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
3 tsp. maple syrup
Milk to moisten

Combine butter, brown sugar and eggs, cream until blended. Pour in coffee. Add remaining ingredients, mix until blended. Pour into a greased rimmed cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes or until done. Prepare frosting by mixing all ingredients until smooth. Frost bars while warm.

Yield: 24 bars

Randy's Chocolate Wows

⅓ cup all-purpose flour
¼ cup unsweetened cocoa
1 tsp. baking powder
¼ tsp. salt
6 oz. semisweet chocolate, chopped
½ cup unsalted butter
2 large eggs
¾ cup sugar
1½ tsp. vanilla extract
2 cups pecans, chopped
6 oz. semisweet chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Grease cookie sheets. In bowl, combine flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt. In a heavy saucepan over medium heat, melt chocolate and butter,

stirring until smooth. Let cool. In a bowl, with mixer on medium speed, beat eggs and sugar until light and lemon colored, 2 minutes. Add cooled chocolate mixture, flour mixture and vanilla; on low speed, beat just until blended. Increase speed to medium; beat 2 minutes. Stir in pecans and chocolate chips. Drop dough by rounded spoonful, 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheets. With back of spoon, spread dough into 2 inch rounds. Bake until tops are shiny and cracked, 13 minutes, rotating cookie sheets between upper and lower racks halfway through baking. With wide metal spatula, transfer cookies to wire racks to cool completely. Store cookies in an airtight container up to 3 days.

Yield: 48 cookies

Rum Fruitcake Cookies

1 cup granulated sugar
¼ cup solid shortening
3 eggs
⅓ cup orange juice
1 tbsp. rum extract
3 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt
2 cups chopped mixed candied fruit
1 cup chopped pecans
¼ cup raisins

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly grease cookie sheets. In a bowl, beat together sugar and shortening, with mixer at medium speed until light and fluffy. Add eggs, orange juice and rum extract and continue beating for 2 minutes. In a bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt until well blended. Add candied fruit, raisins and nuts to dry mixture. Stir into shortening mixture until well combined. Drop dough by rounded spoonful onto prepared cookie sheet about 2 inches apart. Bake until lightly golden brown. Remove from oven and let cookies cool on cookie sheets about 2 minutes. Transfer to wire racks and cool completely.

Yield: 6 dozen

Muffin Top Cookies

½ cup milk
½ cup vegetable oil
1 egg
1¾ cup all-purpose flour
¾ cup sugar
2 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. salt
¾ cup white chocolate chips
¾ cup sliced almonds
1 tsp. shortening

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Combine milk, oil and egg in a medium bowl and beat with a fork. In a small bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder and salt then stir into egg mixture just until moistened. Stir in ½ cup of the chocolate chips and ½ cup of the almonds. Drop dough by rounded tablespoonful or use a cookie scoop onto an ungreased cookie sheet about 2 inches apart. Bake until edges are a light golden brown (about 8 minutes). Remove from oven and cool one minute on cookie sheet then transfer to a wire rack. Combine remaining ¼ cup white chocolate and 1 teaspoon shortening in a small microwave safe bowl and microwave about 1 minute, stirring after 30 seconds. Chips should be smooth when stirred, if not, return to microwave at 15 second intervals. Drizzle chocolate mixture over warm tops. Sprinkle with remaining almonds, slightly pressing them into melted chocolate on cookie tops.

Yield: 20 cookies

Saltine Cracker Cookies

40 saltine crackers
1 cup unsalted butter
1 cup packed light brown sugar
1 cup chocolate chips
½ cup nuts

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line cookie sheet with foil. Place 40 crackers in 1 layer on cookie sheet. In a saucepan on low heat, combine butter and brown sugar. Heat until blended. Boil 3 minutes. Pour mixture over crackers. Sprinkle cracker centers with chocolate chips. Place in oven until chips melt. Sprinkle with nuts. Cut while warm. Store in an airtight container.

Yield: 20 servings

Stripped Peppermint Cookies

1 cup unsalted butter, softened
1 cup granulated sugar
1 egg
½ tsp. peppermint extract
2¼ cups all-purpose flour
¼ tsp. salt
1 tsp. red paste food color

Line a 8X4 inch loaf pan with plastic wrap, leaving 1 inch of plastic overhanging at 2 opposite sides of pan. In a large bowl, beat butter and granulated sugar with mixer on medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and peppermint extract. On medium-low speed, beat in flour and salt until blended. Divide dough in half. Tint half with red food color, kneading with gloved hands until well blended. Press half of plain dough evenly in bottom of pan. Gently press red dough evenly over plain dough. Repeat layers with remaining dough. Cover with plastic wrap; refrigerate 2 hours or until firm. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Remove dough from loaf pan; unwrap. Cut dough in half lengthwise. Cut each half crosswise into ¼ inch slices. Place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake 10-12 minutes or until set. Cool 2 minutes; remove from pans to cooling racks.

Yield: 64 cookies

Confections & Gifts

Toffee-Chocolate Chippers

¼ cup granulated sugar
½ cup packed light brown sugar
1¼ cups all-purpose flour
¼ tsp. baking soda
1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
½ cup almond toffee bits or crushed Heath bars

Pour granulated sugar in bottom of a 1 quart jar and smooth over top. Place brown sugar on top of sugar and pack down firmly and evenly. Spoon flour over brown sugar and pack down. Pour baking soda over flour. Sprinkle walnuts over flour and press down. Place chocolate chips on walnuts and sprinkle toffee bits over chocolate. Press down to fit. Place lid on jar and attach with gift tag and directions for baking.

Instructions for baking:

1 egg
1 stick butter, softened

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Empty contents of jar into a large bowl. Add egg and butter. Beat by hand to blend. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 8-10 minutes or until edges brown. Remove from oven and cool cookies on cookies sheet for 1 minute, then transfer to wire racks.

Yield: 3 dozen

Salty Chocolate Pecan Candy

1 cup pecans, coarsely chopped
3 (4 oz.) bittersweet chocolate baking bars
3 (4 oz.) white chocolate baking bars
1 tsp. coarse sea salt
Parchment paper

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place pecans in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake 8-10 minutes or until toasted, stirring halfway

through. Reduce temperature to 225 degrees. Line a 17 X 12 inch jelly roll pan with parchment paper. Break each chocolate bar into 8 equal pieces. (You will have 48 total) Arrange in a checkerboard pattern in jelly roll pan, alternating white and dark chocolate. (chocolate pieces will touch) Bake at 225 degrees for 5 minutes or just until chocolate pieces are melted. Remove pan to a wire rack. Swirl chocolates into a marble pattern, using a wooden pick. Sprinkle evenly with pecans and salt. Chill 1 hour or until firm. Break into pieces. Store in an airtight container in refrigerator for up to 1 month.

Yield: 1¾ lbs.

Banana Split Bark

16 oz. chocolate candy coating
½ cup chopped dried pineapple rings
¼ cup dried sweetened banana chips
½ cup toasted chopped pecans
½ cup dried cherries
½ cup white chocolate chips
Waxed paper

Chop candy coating in a food processor and set aside. Break banana chips into pieces and set aside. Line a large cookie sheet with waxed paper. Melt candy coating in a heavy 2 quart saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly. Combine pineapple, banana chips, pecans and cherries in a medium bowl, mixing well. Reserve ½ cup of mixture and set aside. Add remaining fruit mixture to melted candy coating, stirring well until evenly coated. Cool at room temperature for at least 5 minutes. Gently fold in white chips. Spread mixture evenly forming a 12 X 9 inch rectangle on prepared cookie sheet. Sprinkle top with reserved fruit mixture. Gently press into chocolate. Cool at least 30 minutes or until set. Break into pieces. Store into an airtight container.

Yield: 32 candies

Milk Chocolate Peanut Butter Bark

2 cups milk chocolate chips
2 cups peanut butter chips
1 cup chopped salted peanuts
Parchment paper

Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Set aside. In a large heavy saucepan, melt 1¾ cup each of milk chocolate chips and peanut butter chips over low heat, stirring constantly. Make sure mixture is smooth. Remove from heat. Add the remaining ¼ cup of each milk chocolate chips and peanut butter chips, continuing to stir until mixture is smooth. Fold in peanuts. Spread mixture on prepared cookie sheet. Refrigerate at least an hour to allow candy to harden. Break into pieces. Store in an airtight container.

Yield 32 candies

Mocha Almond Fudge

1 (12 oz.) bag dark chocolate chips
1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
1 cup toasted almonds, chopped
2 tbsp. unsalted butter, room temperature
2 tsp. instant espresso powder
1 tsp. vanilla extract
½ tsp. almond extract
¼ tsp. salt

Line a 9 inch square baking dish with parchment paper, leaving a 2 inch overhang on both sides. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, combine chocolate chips with butter and condensed milk and stirring continuously, cook until mixture is totally melted and smooth, 4-7 minutes. Once smooth, stir in vanilla and almond extract and espresso powder and salt. Fold in toasted almonds and pour mixture into prepared dish. Place in refrigerator and let set at least 3 hours before taking from baking dish and cutting into squares.

Yield: 4 dozen pieces

White Chocolate Snowman Truffles

2 cups shortcake cookie crumbs
1 cup cola
4 oz. semisweet chocolate, melted
2 oz. butter, melted
12 oz. white chocolate
Black coloring for frosting

Place ground cookies in a bowl, stir in cola and set aside for 5 minutes. Add melted semisweet chocolate and melted butter and mix well. Cover bowl and leave in refrigerator for 30 minutes. Roll 1 inch balls and place them on parchment paper cookies sheet. Freeze at least 30 minutes. Melt 10 ounces of white chocolate and drop frozen balls in the melted chocolate; using a fork transfer them onto parchment paper (gently tap off excess chocolate). Place back in freezer for 10 minutes. Melt remaining chocolate and drizzle onto truffles. Use black frosting to make 2 dots for eye. Store in refrigerator.

Yield: 30 truffles

Strawberry Fudge

1 (16 oz.) container strawberry frosting
12 oz. white almond bark or candy coating,
broken into small pieces

Lightly spray a 9X9 inch pan with non-stick cooking spray. Place the entire container of frosting and almond bark into a microwave safe bowl. Microwave on medium power (50%) for 45 seconds. Remove and stir. Return to microwave for 20 more seconds, and then stir until completely smooth. Pour into prepared pan and refrigerator until set. Remove and cut into squares.

Yield: 50 pieces

Peanut Butter Cup Fudge

25 Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, divided
1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
3 cups milk chocolate chips

Line a 7X11 inch baking dish with foil, taking care to press out the corners as smoothly as possible. Line the baking dish with 15 unwrapped whole Peanut Butter cups and set aside. In a large microwave safe bowl, combine sweetened condensed milk and chocolate chips. Microwave on high in 30 second increments until completely melted and smooth. Pour melted chocolate mixture into baking dish over peanut butter cups and smooth out evenly. Break the remaining Peanut Butter Cups into pieces and sprinkle on top. Allow fudge to set out for about 1 hour, until it reaches room temperature, then refrigerate for 2-3 hours, until firm. Once fudge is solid, gently peel away foil and cut into squares.

Yield: 25 squares

Chocolate & Fruit Snack Mix

½ cup unsalted butter
2 tbsp. granulated sugar
1 tbsp. cocoa powder
½ tsp. ground cinnamon
3 cups bite-size crisp rice cereal
3 cups bite-size crisp wheat cereal
2 cups toasted oat cereal rings
1 cup cashews
1½ cups (6 oz. pkg.) dried fruit bits
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

In a 4 quart microwave safe bowl, place butter. Microwave on high 1 minute or until melted; stir in sugar, cocoa and cinnamon. Add cereals and cashews; stir until evenly coated. Microwave on high 3 minutes, stirring after each minute. Cool completely; stir in dried fruit bits and chocolate chips. Store in tightly covered container.

Yield: 9 cups

Chocolate Banana Pops

4 bananas, sliced and frozen
½ cup almond butter (or any nut butter)
¼ cup dry powdered chocolate drink mix
2 cups granola (gluten-free if preferred)

Line a 12 cup muffin tin with paper liners; set aside along with 12 Popsicle sticks. Place frozen banana slices in food processor and blend until crumbly. Scrape down side. Blend again until mushy and smooth, with small bits of banana remaining. Add almond butter and chocolate mix and blend until smooth and looks like ice cream. Place a spoonful of ice cream into each muffin liner. Top with a layer of granola, repeat layering until liners are full. Freeze for an hour and insert Popsicle sticks. Freeze overnight and keep frozen and covered until ready to serve.

Yield: 12 pops

Candied Pecans

3 egg whites
1 tsp. vanilla
1 cup granulated sugar
1 lb. pecan halves
½ cup unsalted butter
1 cup confectioners' sugar

In a medium bowl, beat egg whites until soft peaks form; add vanilla and gradually add sugar. Toss in the pecans and mix gently with a wooden spoon or spatula until coated well. Melt butter and pour on a baking sheet. Spread pecans evenly over baking sheet and cook 40 minutes, turning every 10 minutes-do not skip this step! Remove from oven and cool 2 minutes. Place confectioners' sugar in a large resealable plastic bag; add pecans, seal and shake until coated. Best served warm.

Yield: 7 cups

Index

Beverages & Appetizers	2-3	Side Dishes	11-12
Herbed Feta & Sun-Dried Tomato Dip		Green Beans with Mushrooms and Bacon	
Pistachio-Crusted Goat Cheese Log		Coconut-Pecan Sweet Potatoes	
Texas Dip		Barry's Red Beans and Rice	
Hot Crab Dip		Cranberry Beets	
Chicken & Onion Cheese Spread		Asparagus with Dill Sauce	
Orange Lemonade		Zucchini Parmesan	
Fruity Freeze Drink		Parmesan Roasted Carrots	
Christmas Punch		Broccoli Parmesan	
Pomegranate-Orange Sparkler		Special Rice Casserole	
Pomegranate-Ginger Ale Punch			
Harper's Guiltless Pumpkin Dip		Entrees	13-15
		Crispy Buttermilk Fried Chicken	
Breads	4-6	Chicken Pie with Fritos	
Red Velvet Banana Bread		Cheeseburger Sliders	
Red Velvet Scones		Oven-Barbecued Beef Brisket	
Pumpkin Pie Crescents		Sausage and Cheese Bake	
Sour Cream Muffins		Chicken & Dumpling Casserole	
Cranberry Butter		Ground Beef Enchilada Casserole	
Fruity Pebbles Breakfast Bread		Asian Steak Wraps	
Hummingbird Cake Quick Bread		Cream Cinnamon Oatmeal Bake	
Cream Cheese Glaze		Spaghetti Pie	
Cherry Cola Bread			
Rebecca's Apple Fritter Casserole		Desserts	16-18
		Chocolate Caramel Cupcakes	
Soups & Salads	7-10	Hazelnut Chocolate Cake	
Tomato Basil Soup		Chocolate Hazelnut Frosting	
Spinach-Tomato Salad		Cinnamon Blueberry Sauce	
Tomato Basil Dressing		Strawberry Buttercream Cake	
Orange-Berry Salad		Strawberry Buttercream Frosting	
Broccoli Pasta Salad		Golden Rum Cake	
Cheddar Broccoli Soup		Chocolate Banana Walnut Bread Pudding	
Turkey Sausage Jambalaya		Santa's Red Velvet Pie with Chocolate Frosting	
Tropical Slaw		Chocolate Chess Pie	
Peaches & Cream Gelatin Salad		Brownie Chocolate Chip Cheesecake	
Warm Cranapple Salad		Flourless Gluten Free Chocolate Fudge Cake	
Corn & Sweet Potato Chowder			
Tropical Passion Fruit Salad			
Throneberry's Taco Soup			
Homemade Taco Seasoning			
Vegetable Beef Soup			

Cookies & Bars

19-25

Spiced Spritz Cookies
Gluten Free Almond Cookies
Layered Fruitcake Bars
Hummingbird Cookies
Coconut Hedgehog Cookies
Wreath Macarons
Gluten Free Gems
Pumpkin Snickerdoodles
Red Velvet Crinkle Cookies
Frosty No Bake Cookies
Mix & Match Cereal Bars
Reindeer Gingersnaps
Peanut Butter Reindeer Cookies
Russian Tea Cakes
Holiday House Cookies
Santa's Buster Brownies
Royal Icing
Coffee Bars
Randy's Chocolate Wows
Rum Fruitcake Cookies
Muffin Top Cookies
Saltine Cracker Cookies
Stripped Peppermint Cookies



Confections & Gifts

26-28

Toffee Chocolate Chippers
Salty Chocolate Pecan Candy
Banana Split Bark
Milk Chocolate Peanut Butter Bark
Mocha Almond Fudge
White Chocolate Snowman Truffles
Strawberry Fudge
Peanut Butter Cup Fudge
Chocolate Banana Pops
Chocolate & Fruit Snack Mix
Candied Pecans



Enjoy cookies and milk around 3:00 pm every afternoon and then lie down for a cozy nap. Share the wonderful, fragrant memories of these programs with family and friends every Christmas for years to come! May your days be merry and bright! God Bless!

Ann Brunberry