

Elayne Stulberg, the happy cooker, is new columnist

By JUDITH BERNE

As a child, Elayne Stulberg never followed her mother around the kitchen, studying culinary form, begging to help.

The Observer & Eccentric's new food columnist got into cooking only after she was married, and dinner guests at her West Bloomfield home clamored for her recipes.

"My mother was a career woman. The last place she wanted to be was in the kitchen. I used to plead for

dinner dates," Mrs. Stulberg jokes.

During her first year of marriage to dentist David Stulberg she rarely went near a stove. Then "my husband started bringing me every cookbook he could get his hands on."

Determined to stay home as her five children were growing up, Mrs. Stulberg "started fiddling around in the kitchen. When you have three little ones in diapers, you have to have a more creative outlet than the trips to the diaper pail," she laughs.

As she tried out various recipes, she

added "a little of this and a little of that. I didn't know how good I was until I gave a dinner party," she says.

Friends wanted her recipes. They wanted to watch her cook.

Her reputation as a cook and food writer, lecturer and teacher grew from there.

MRS. STULBERG'S COLUMN, titled after her cookbook "The Happy Cooker," will cover all facets of food — from seasonal recipes to dining out.

She believes the Observer & Eccentric's new food section is being launched at a time when women are feeling free to return to the kitchen in the wake of women's liberation.

"People stopped cooking for awhile," she says. "They took company out to eat. Now it seems they are turning back into their homes as in olden times."

Although the rising cost of food, services and fuel has something to do with it, Mrs. Stulberg thinks it would have happened anyway.

"Women basically love cooking," she says. "They feel very creative about it."

Her cooking classes include "even elderly women who want a new slant."

LIKE ORDINARY COOKS, Mrs. Stulberg acknowledges, "I never know until that morning what I'm going to make for dinner."

Cooking skills can be acquired, she says, but the distinction between good and great cooks "is probably something

inside. Eye appeal is almost as important as taste," she adds.

The happy cooker believes the most important ingredient to fine cooking is "love of good food. And I love good food."

She spurs fast food restaurants, saying "I'd rather starve than eat something I don't like."

Mrs. Stulberg is currently at work on a second cookbook, featuring recipes from around the world. Her first book was devoted to gourmet dishes for weight-conscious people.



She bakes a mixture of 'school-daze cookies'

It seems only days ago that youngsters were happily chanting, "School's out, school's out. Teacher let the monkeys out."

Where did the summer go? After approximately 2½ months of relaxed schedules, respite from chaffering youngsters hither and yonder, simplified get-me-out-of-the-kitchen warm weather meals, five children's constant trekking to the refrigerator for "snacks" and "something cold to drink," and my sun-up to sun-down job as bad mouth arbitrator and fight referee — it has finally come to a close.

Our children are now back at their respective schools composing the standard fall essay on "How I Spent My Summer." My youngsters will probably sum up the entire vacation by answering — "listening to Mother yell!"

As for me, after bidding the children a fond (?) farewell that first day of school, I could hardly contain my eagerness at the prospect of spending several luxurious hours doing as I wished. However, after a few hours of solitude, I found the quiet maddening. After better than 80 days of living with a mental check list of plans to activate on day-one of school, sans children, I wound up staying home.

Instead of pursuing any of my eagerly anticipated interests, I spent several hours baking cookies for my noisemakers' late day homecoming.

Amidst shrieks of "We're home!" and "I'm starving," interspersed with "What smells so good?" came squeals of delight as they whiffed the spicy aroma of fresh oven baked cookies deliciously scenting the entire house while waiting on cooling racks to greet them.

Their enthusiastic ooohs and ahhhhs as they devoured them were almost enough to erase

thoughts of our enforced togetherness during the past 80 days.

The arrival of this season brings with it the desire to employ some heavier and heartier food preparation than most of us practiced during the warm summer months. And my first step in that direction is usually in the form of baking. After all, what arouses greater gratification from youngsters upon their return from school than golden brown cookies still warm and fragrant from the oven?

Any homemaker desirous of an image builder with youngsters should try the "assorted cookie routine" on them. And since most cookies are exceptionally simple to make, it is one of the first items the kitchen novice should attempt. Also, what better promotes closeness and aids open communication between parent and child than the joy of baking together?

Keep the freezer and cookie jar full of these recipes. The delectable bits of love from you to your family bring an indescribable joy and leaves, in its wake, memories to treasure.

BANANEST COOKIES

Cream ½ cup butter with ¼ cup brown sugar. Add 1 beaten egg yolk (reserve white). Blend in 1 cup sifted flour. Roll dough into small round balls, using ½ tsp. per cookie. Beat egg white slightly and dip cookie into it and then into 1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts. Indent center with spoon tip or finger and set on greased cookie sheet about 1 to 1½ inches apart.

Bake in preheated 350-degree oven for 8 minutes. Remove, press centers again and spoon approximately ¼ tsp. strawberry jam into centers. Add 1 chocolate chip to jam center of each cookie. Return to oven for an additional 10 minutes. Makes 2 dozen. Freezes beautifully.

SNOW BALLS

Cream 1 cup butter (or margarine). Add 4 (tbsp.) powdered sugar, 1 tsp. rum, 2 cups sifted flour and 1 cup chopped pecans. Set on ungreased baking sheet, approximately 1 inch apart and bake in pre-heated 350-degree oven for 15 minutes. While still warm (but not immediately from oven or they will crack) gently drop into a bag of powdered sugar. Makes 6 dozen. Freezes beautifully.

RICHLACH

Sift together 1½ cups enriched flour, 2 tbsp. sugar and ¼ tsp. salt. Make a well in the center of dough. Add 3 medium eggs, beating until all is formed into a smooth ball.

Lightly grease a cookie sheet and drop from teaspoon 1 inch apart. Bake in preheated 325-degree oven for 20 minutes or until lightly browned at edges. Makes 3 dozen.

COOKIE CRUNCH

Sift together 1½ cups flour, ½ tsp. baking soda and 1 tsp. salt. Cream ½ cup butter (or margarine), ½ cup brown sugar and ¼ cup granulated sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in 1 egg and 1 tsp. vanilla to butter-cream mixture. Add flour mixture to cream mixture, blending thoroughly. Stir in ¾ cup chopped almonds and ¼ cup chocolate chips. Drop by teaspoon ungreased baking sheet. Bake in 375-degree oven for 10 minutes. Makes 5 dozen.

BUTTERSCOTCH COOKIES

Sift together 4 cups flour, 1 tsp. baking soda, 1

tsp. cream of tartar and a pinch of salt. Cream 1 cup butter (or margarine), 2 cups brown sugar firmly packed until light and fluffy. Beat 2 eggs and 1½ tsp. vanilla. Add dry ingredients and ¾ cups coarsely chopped peanuts.

Shape into rolls. Wrap each in plastic wrap and chill until very firm. Slice thin and bake in preheated 400-degree oven 7-9 minutes. Makes approximately 6 dozen, 2-inch cookies.

FABULOUS BUTTER COOKIES

Cream ½ lb. butter with 1 cup brown sugar, which has been sifted. Add 2 egg yolks (reserve whites), 1 tsp. vanilla and 2½ cups sifted flour and mix all well. Roll in small balls (approximately ½ tsp. per cookie) and place on ungreased cookie sheet 2 inches apart. Lightly stir egg white to slightly frothy stage. Dip a fork into egg white and gently press times onto cookie to flatten and make lined pattern. Repeat procedure for each cookie. Place nut or maraschino in center of each. Bake in preheated 325-degree oven for 20 minutes. Makes 6 dozen. Freezes beautifully.

NEXT WEEK: APPLE COOKERY

Mrs. Stulberg, a West Bloomfield resident, is a food writer and lecturer and author of the cookbook for dieters, "The Happy Cooker." Letters, requests and recipes are welcomed. Recipes selected for column sharing will give complete don't credit and must be accompanied by name, address and phone number. All column communications must be made by writing The Happy Cooker, c The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 38251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

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The Recipes Are Here!

Baked Apples

What better tasty dessert or partytime snack for the cool season coming up but apples, hot from the oven! Here's a great recipe for baked apples in wine:

- 4 large baking apples
- ¼ cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 4 teaspoons butter or margarine
- 1 cup rose
- ¼ cup dairy sour cream

Core apples; pare strip from top of each. Place apples in 8x8x2 inch baking dish. Stir together brown sugar and ground nutmeg; spoon into apple centers. Top each with 1 teaspoon of the butter or margarine; pour wine into baking dish. Bake, uncovered, in 350° oven for 1 hour, basting with wine occasionally. Serve warm. If desired, top each with a dollop of sour cream and sprinkle with additional ground nutmeg. Makes 4 servings.

Watch for more delicious recipes each week in

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