## Chaldean heritage leads woman to cookbook fame

## By Elizabeth Roach staff writer

The B in breakfast needn't stand for boring" if cooks take a few tips from

"boring" is cooks take a Julia Najor's cookbook. "Back home, they used to fry dates with scrambled eggs: It doesn't sound good, but it's delicious," said the 10-year West Bloomfield resident and au-thor of "Babylonian Cuisine Chaldean Cookbook from the Middle East."

Mrs. Najor, born in Telkeppe, Iraq, has compiled the first English-lan-guage cookbook of food eaten by Chal-deans, who come from the northern nat of Iraq.

part of Irag.

"They to healthy, most of these re-cipes," said the 40-year-old housewife, adding that Chaldean food makes am-ple use of yogurt, cracked wheat and cream of wheat. "Most of our dishes, they look like (something cooked by) a gournet. They are fancy," Mrs. Najor said.

SAMPLINGS OF Chaldean food she recently served to visitors bore out that statement. She prepared a glistening cream caramel pudding, not unlike the flam caten in some Latin American countries; molded strudel dough stuffed

with rice, meathalls, chicken, peas, al-monds and raisins; and a plate of color-ful pastries and stuffed cookies. Mrs. Najor's cookhook contains a va-riety of recipes, including appetters, soup, bread, meat, poultry, fish, vege-tables, wheat and rice dishes, desserts and spices. "I had to measure some of the re-cipes four or five times. But it wasn't that hard." that hard." As Mrs. Najor tried out recipes for the book, she had a ready-made group of tasters — her husband, Ramzy, 41, 13, 15 and 16. "I never cooked when I was at home," said Mrs. Najor, who came with her husband to the United States 17 years ago. "I had four children in five years. I really stated (cooking) 10 years ago, after they grew a little bit. "It's my hohy, I guess. You can't do too many things, because you start is oring your kibs." Good, I really do." The hubband's favorite? The hubband's favorite dish is cooked created wheat. The children's favorite is spiced fried rior that dish, one of them meatless. The other two contain chicken, ground beef, hard-boiled eggs, potatoss and various spices.

tautos, whet and rice classes, takento and spices. She also provides a section on foods actuation classes and offers notes and the classes and the section and bistory. In dithes in her classes and the section of the photographs of her native village in 1950 and of her family in 1929. Since Chaldeans, who are Catholic, traditionally eat no meat during Lent, the cookbook also has many meatless dishes.

dishes. Her idea for a Chaldean cookbook grew as friends requested recipes for the various foods she prepared. Also, she wanted her two daughters to be able to prepare Chaldean food, she said.

"I WAS really making a little book for myself." One difficulty she encountered was that Chaldeans subscribe to the pinch-ol-this and a-adb-of-that school of cooking. To standardize the recipes for the cookbook, she had to translate such quantities into measurements.

ONE WAY she gets her children to eat their vegetables is to serve them in stuffed grape leaves, apparently anoth

spices

er favorite. Gupmar, a cream spread for breat or toast, and ku/fa, fried ground bee patties, can be found on the breakfas menu in the Mrs. Najor tome. In Iraq, "We ate cracked wheat eve-ry single day for lunch or dinner. Hard by we ate any meat, hardly we ate any sweets." Stewed vegetables, which

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Mrs. Najor said are among the easiest dishes in her cookbook, and dried fruits also were commonplace in ber home' Iraq. Chaldean food may seem similar ( food from other Middle Eastern coun-tood from other Middle Eastern coun-

JOHN STANO/staff pho

## Mercy students enter Computer Bowl V

Point spreads won't be the only thing computed on "Super Saturday." teams of top math students from 46 area high schools will be calculating to capture "Computer Bowl V," which kicks off Jan. 23 in the University of Detroit's student center on its McNichols cam-nus

pus Participating students from Mercy High School, Farmington Hills, are: Carolyn Bean, Kathy Carolyn Maureen Gilmore and Mary Ann Herrman. The annual math computer contest,

designed by U-D mathematics profes-sors, challenges a four-member team from each high school to solve four complex math problems within three hours on the university's computer.

hours on the unvestiy's competition Rounds of preliminary competition will be held at 9 am. and 130 pm., Jan. 23, 30 and 31. The teams that score the highest in accuracy, speed and efficient use of the computer dur-ing the preliminary rounds will return to U-D for the championship playoff, Sunday, Feb. 14. Five runner-nop teams also will be invited back for the finals. Dr. Michael Skaft, a U-D professor and a coordinator of the contest, said

the computer bowl is modeled after "It's an intense competition, and one to compete intellectually," he said to compete intellectually," he said speed and refine their teamwork," "Since all of the participating schools have very good math and computer programs, winning carries consider able preside. "The students selected to compete individual trophies for team mem-bacher school making the final rounds. Certificates will be awarded to to and the awarded to to and the students who train hard

Najor's cockbook contains a variety of recipes, including fancy desserts like this cake.

each participating student. The defending champion from last year's context is Derived to Country Day High or of the computer bowing high school High or of the computer bowin include Lakeland (1980) and Trenton (1978 and 1978). Schools from the city of Windsor, as well as Livingston, Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair, Washlehaw and Wayne coun-ties, will compete in the contest this year.





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