

## taste buds

chef Larry  
JanesListen to  
voice of  
experience

When I graduated from Gabriel Richard High School in Riverview back in 1969, boys never took home economics. I don't think there was ever a rule against it, other than momma saying "God forbid!"

Of course, if memory serves me correctly, momma said the same thing when I announced I was going to pursue a cooking career.

Back then, "culinary arts" was nothing more than a glorified chocolate chip baking class with a week of Wilton cake decorating thrown in.

Home ec has long since been replaced by classes now called "life management," and I often wonder how my life would have been changed learning about nutrition, home management and budgeting had I not learned it from life's famous "school of hard knocks" and momma's famous "I told you-so's."

EXPERIENCE HAS taught me how to figure square yards after visiting numerous floor covering shops and wallpaper stores and asking for assistance while covering an area "about the size of a full-sized Chevy."

Experience has also taught me about EEP's and quick recovery heaters after wondering why I always ran out of hot water during my shower while the dishwasher was running.

Sure, I now use coupons and save almost enough money to make my car insurance payments, but true kitchen economies go way beyond saving \$20 a week for necessities. Budgeting? Hardly.

One of life's major disappointments was revealed to me last summer when I bought my first "new" set of major kitchen appliances.

Never having owned an automatic ice maker, I was shocked to learn that after installation, my usable freezer space was decreased by almost 40 percent.

Realize now that I'm not a major meat eater, but after everything was installed, I was hard placed to find enough room in the freezer for anything more than a few packages of puff pastry dough, a few Zip Lock bags of frozen fruit and vegetables and the ice pack from a portable beer cooler.

I can't imagine where a family of four could squeeze in some ice cream, orange juice, a loaf of bread and a turkey knowing it would never fit in my freezer.

FURTHERMORE, WHERE does it sit in the book of life that a white kitchen floor shows every drop of pasta sauce and loose cat food "crunchy" that it happens to come in contact with? Little did I know that my kitchen counter required a special cleaner, as do my kitchen cabinets.

As far as I'm concerned, stainless steel sinks belong in a restaurant where they can afford to pay a dishwasher \$4 an hour keep them clean.

If there's anyone out there who's thinking about writing a book on kitchen economics, in addition to the above mentioned, here are a few questions that, if answered, would make me want to buy it.

What can you do with five extra servings of cooked rice? Can you freeze leftover pasta? How can you get those bits of paper labels out of the things that twist around in the dishwasher? Is it really cheaper just to buy another set of mini blinds rather than clean the ones you have?

And finally, what can you make with a bag of drunken carrots that have been sitting behind a six pack of beer for two months?

I certainly don't have all the answers, but I can offer a few recipe tips for that leftover rice and pasta.

See recipes inside.

# What's cooking in high school

## Students learn lessons in home economizing

Editor's note: Our series on weathering the recession concludes with a peek into a high school cooking class.

By Keely Wygonik  
staff writer

Even though she's still in high school, Donna Morris knows a lot about planning meals and buying groceries.

"The prices are really high, you learn how to make sacrifices. You can't always have what you want. We wanted fresh pineapple, we couldn't have it, we used canned instead."

MORRIS, a senior at Stevenson High School in Livonia, learned about grocery shopping and meal planning by doing it in Sheila Garvey's Foods III class.

There are six kitchens in Garvey's classroom. Five students are assigned to each kitchen. They share cooking, cleaning up and serving responsibilities. Each class period is 55 minutes long; students usually cook three of the five days they are in class.

Garvey teaches five food classes a day, on three different levels. One third of the students are boys.

Recently, Garvey gave each kitchen in her Foods III class \$10, and told them to plan, shop for and cook brunch for eight. She supplied staples like flour and milk.

"WE HAD to find something everyone usually likes, and choose foods from the four main food groups," said Karen Whitmarsh, sophomore, who wants to be a party chef.

Whitmarsh and her classmates served chicken stir-fry with vegetables over rice, and homemade almond cookies.

"We did better than we thought," said Angie Cluffatelli, a sophomore. "We had \$3 cents left over. Pea pods were expensive, \$2.99 a pound, so we counted them out to get the amount we needed. We took our time shopping and looked for bargains."

"We bought the store brand rice, found red peppers marked down, and got boneless chicken breasts on special for \$1.99 a pound. We went to two different stores to get what we needed."

Having just survived a move from one house to another, I feel a bit out of breath as I begin this week's column.

Actually, it could almost be considered a minor miracle that this column exists.

At all, considering the fact that a bit of searching had to be done before all the parts to my word processor were found.

Thankfully, despite the tumultuous upheaval and ordeal that moving entails, life is slowly returning to normal. It is as if each box unpacked is a new root being put down, ensuring that our transplanted family will thrive and flourish in its new location.

THE OLD expression, "Home is where the heart is," is ever so true, and as our possessions are being gradually refitted into place, home is also becoming, in the vernacular of our three sons, "sweet," as well.

This week's Winner Dinner, submitted by Kim Förster of Plymouth, is a meal that is guaranteed to draw rave notices.

Featuring crunch chicken nuggets, homemade potato chips, a marinated vegetable salad and vanilla pudding, this menu is quick and easily put together. It has special appeal for young eaters as much of it can be eaten with fingers.

Förster is married and the mother of two young daughters. Originally from Rockwood, Michigan, a small town near Monroe, Förster and her husband Mike, have lived in Plymouth for five years.

A graduate of Eastern Michigan University with a degree in nursing, Förster has worked as an obstetrics nurse at Garden City Hospital for five years.

SHE IS putting her training to good use at home as she cares for her own young family and awaits the



Leanne Felzone (left) and Karen Whitmarsh (right) tie and blanch carrot bundles to serve with brunch of chicken vegetable stir-fry served over rice, rolls, almond cookies and tea.

IN AN age of microwave dinners, fast foods, and eating on the run, planning meals and cooking is becoming a lost art.

"A lot of parents don't know how to make food," said Garvey. "The dinner conversation at home is often 'what did you learn in foods class today?' The parents are learning too."

Garvey doesn't use any mixes or prepared foods in her classes. Pots of oregano, rosemary, basil, chives and thyme line the front of her desk.

The basil was almost picked clean. Last week the students made pasta sauce and used it. She also teaches students how to freeze and can fruits and vegetables.

"We live off our canning all year. In the spring we'll make strawberry jam, in the fall we'll make grape jelly and can tomatoes, pears or peaches."

COOKING CLASS isn't a piece of cake, students in Garvey's classes

words. "I have high expectations, and I expect perfection," she said. Students have homework assignments. They have to make white bread and a pie crust at home.

In Foods I students learn how to make chocolate chip cookies, quick breads, casseroles and pizza. Foods II features cooking with herbs and spices, canning, and a field trip to Food Emporium on Six Mile in Livonia where they learn about meat.

Foods III students learn about cooking with appliances and foods from foreign countries.

Students also learn from guest chefs like Steve Smith who showed them how to use a pasta machine. "I stress home cooking," said Garvey. "I tell them to cook for people you love, and that love you, and you will do a better job."

See recipes inside.



Karen Whitmarsh (left) heats water to blanch carrot bundles while Angie Cluffatelli stir-fries chicken and vegetables.

## Finger foods appeal to kids

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Kim Förster and her daughters, Elisabeth, 18 months, and Kaitlin, 3½, enjoy their Winner Dinner.

birth of a third child in August. Förster enjoys cooking and often plans meals that her children can help her prepare. As well as being a good learning experience for her daughters, Förster has found that they tend to eat a better dinner when they have had a hand in preparing it.

Thank you, Kim Förster, for sharing your delicious recipes with us, and congratulations on being selected this week's Winner Dinner.

## WINNER DINNER

### Recipes

#### FAVORITE CHICKEN NUGGETS

Easy to make, these crunchy nuggets are full of flavor and take only minutes to prepare.

Because chicken breasts vary in size, this recipe makes enough coating for 12-14 nuggets.

3 tablespoons margarine, melted  
2 whole chicken breasts, skinned, boned and cut into chunks  
1½ cups coarsely crushed saltine cracker crumbs  
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese  
½ package dry ranch dressing mix  
honey or ketchup for dipping

Dip chicken in melted margarine and toss to coat.

In a plastic bag, combine cracker crumbs, Parmesan cheese and ranch dressing.

Place a few chicken pieces at a time into the bag, close the bag tightly and shake, firmly to coat well.

Place the chicken pieces in a single layer on a lightly greased baking sheet.

Bake in a 450 degree oven for 7-9 minutes or until the chicken is no longer pink.

HOMEMADE POTATO CHIPS

Scrub clean and thinly slice medium baking potatoes.

In a deep frying pan or sauce pan, heat 2 cups vegetable oil and fry one sliced potato at a time for 5-6 minutes or until the slices are crisp and golden brown.

Remove them with a slotted spoon and place on paper towels to drain. Season lightly with salt.

#### MARINATED VEGETABLE

1 cup broccoli, cut into bite-sized pieces  
1 cup cauliflower, cut into bite-sized pieces  
1 cup carrots, sliced  
bottled Italian salad dressing

Marinate the vegetables in salad dressing two hours or more.

Refrigerate and serve chilled. For vegetables that are slightly softer and a little bit easier to eat, either microwave them for five minutes or steam them until they are crunchy-tender.

#### VANILLA PUDDING

1 cup sugar  
4 tablespoons flour  
2 eggs, beaten  
2 cups milk  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1 tablespoon margarine

Mix together flour, sugar and milk.

Microwave for 4-5 minutes until thickened and bubbly. Gradually add the eggs and stir. Cook 1-2 minutes more. Stir in margarine and vanilla.

Follow the same steps if you make the pudding on a stove.

As a variation, grind up some oreo cookies, sprinkle the crumbs on top of the pudding and rename it "Dirt Pudding."