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rock-shaped butter cookies with green-colored frosting) said Jeri Donahue of Beverly Hills. "And my husband, Larry, would be disappointed if I didn't serve Irish coffee."

Jeri, who says she became an "adopted" Irish person when she married her husband, said St. Patrick's day is a "big deal" for her children.

"In fact, my son Patrick considers this 'his day,' she said. She added that she and her husband spent one St. Patrick's Day in Ireland and were surprised to discover that this day is a religious holiday with no special celebrations.

"We expected to have a wild time in Ireland. However, the natives said that we had to go to the United States for the 'real celebrations,'" she said.

Another discovery the Donahues made on their visit was the blandness of the Irish diet.

"The people basically consume meat and potatoes with stew being a popular dish. And their dishes are not highly seasoned."

While the Langanes of Southfield have never been to Ireland, they have come to appreciate that country's patron saint. "And we sure like celebrating his day," said Mary Sue Langan.

She and her husband, Jack, grew up in Cleveland, which has a large Irish American population. "There's a big parade on St. Patrick's Day, and many of the school children, especially those attending Catholic schools, have the day off. When the parade is over, everyone (of legal age) goes from pub to pub to celebrate."

Mary Sue said that her pub days have been exchanged for family celebrations with the birth of her "Irish twins," Brian, 9, and Christopher, 8. She calls them her twins because they are less than a year apart in age.

"Prior to St. Patrick's Day, the boys and I make shamrock-shaped candles (white chocolate dyed green) and shamrock-shaped cookies for them to take to school."

Her family starts their St. Patrick's Day celebrations by hanging an Irish flag on their front porch. They have corned beef and cabbage for dinner.

"Luckily, my mother-in-law is a good cook, and she has given me a great recipe for this meal."

The Langanes have another St. Patrick's Day tradition. They decorate their English neighbor's house with green balloons and streamers.

"It's just friendly fun. They delight in wearing the color orange (a declaration of antagonism) in front of us, so we had to find a way to retaliate," Mary Sue said.

See family-tested recipes inside.

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toes, flour and water, is also a big hit with him. "If you grew up with it, it's delicious," he said. He licked his lips and added, "you eat it with hot butter."

His extensive knowledge of traditional Irish foods made him especially popular at the high school lately. He is serving as an advisor to school officials working on the March 17 annual St. Patrick's Day fund-raising auction. This year's 7 1/2-hour event, starting at 5:30 p.m., is entitled "Bringing in the Green."

Tickets are \$75 per person or \$20 per person for a table of 10. Call (810) 647-7423.

For the occasion, O'Hare donated his Irish Soda Bread recipe. The freshly-baked bread is intended to complement the traditional boiled potatoes, cabbage and corned beef.

At the event, a variety of metro-Detroit restaurants will be serving their favorite St. Patrick's

"I love to cook soup. I also love to cook fish. My favorite is trout."

Brother Patrick O'Hare

Day foods. The buffet dinner will kick-off a night of live Irish music, visiting between old friends and teachers, as well as live and silent auctions.

Even Brother O'Hare will be there. "I'll be the roving ambassador, meeting with all my old students and their parents," he said, adding that "a lot of people come back to reminisce."

Aside from getting the former Brother Rice families back together, the auction plays an important part in the school's vitality, indicated the brother. "The whole purpose of the auction is to carry on the tradition of the school," he said. "It covers the gap between (student) tuition and

costs." Another important factor in this year's auction is the 150th anniversary of the death of Brother Edmund Rice, the founder of the Congregation of Christian Brothers. He is in line to be canonized this year.

"In recognition of this anniversary, the Auction Committee has set an ambitious goal for itself to make this the school's most successful auction," said Brother Rice principal George Gremley in a letter. To help achieve their goal, the committee has put together a unique array of items including: trips, jewelry, dinners with local celebrities and a movie package.

See recipes inside.

Brother O'Hare's stew, soda bread

See related story on Taste front.

BROTHER O'HARE'S LAMB STEW

- 3 pound neck of lamb, cut crosswise through bone
- 8 medium potatoes, peeled
- 4 large onions
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- Chopped parsley

Wipe meat with damp paper towels. Trim off all fat and discard.

Thinly slice 2 potatoes and onions. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

In Dutch oven, make a layer of the sliced potato, top with half of sliced onion, then add lamb.

Sprinkle with half of the salt, thyme and pepper. Add remaining onions and whole potatoes. Sprin-

kle with remaining salt, thyme and pepper.

Add 2 cups water, cover Dutch oven with tight fitting lid. Place in oven.

Cook for 2 1/2 hours or until meat is tender. Before serving, sprinkle with chopped parsley. Serves 6.

IRISH SODA BREAD

- 2 cups unsifted, all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons butter or margarine, softened
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine, melted

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Lightly grease small cookie sheet. In a large bowl, sift together flour,

sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.

Cut in 3 tablespoons softened butter with pastry blender or fork until mixture looks like fine crumbs.

Add buttermilk, mix in with a fork until dry ingredients are moistened. Turn out on lightly floured pastry cloth or board. Knead gently until smooth, about 1 minute. Shape into a ball, place on prepared cookie sheet.

Flatten into a 7-inch circle — dough will be about 1 1/4 inches thick.

Press a large, floured knife into center of loaf, almost through bottom. Cut a cross across loaf.

Bake 30 to 40 minutes, or until top is golden brown and loaf sounds hollow when tapped.

Remove to wire rack to cool. Brush with 1 tablespoon melted butter.

Makes 1 loaf.

Real maple syrup

Taste the difference it makes

See Larry James' Taste buds column on Taste front. If you want to tap your own maple trees, the spouts, which are called spiles, are available at the Cranbrook Nature Center, 1221 N. Woodward, and some hardware stores.

The following recipes use real maple syrup. Even if you don't make it yourself, taste the difference, it's worth it!

Maple Syrup Mousse

- 1 cup pure maple syrup
- 3 eggs, separated
- 1 pint whipping cream

Heat maple syrup to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring constantly for 3 minutes. Remove from heat and cool for 5 minutes.

Beat egg yolks in a small bowl until thick and lemon colored. Stir in small amounts of the syrup very gradually, beating well after every addition. Beat egg whites until stiff.

Allow the mixture to come to room temperature.

Beat the egg whites until stiff. Gently fold the beaten egg whites into the cooled syrup mixture. Cover and freeze at least three hours. Spoon into individual dessert dishes. Serves 6.

MAPLE SAUSAGE AND APPLES

- 1 pound pork sausage links
- 1 cup pure maple syrup
- 1/2 cup white vinegar
- 4 apples, cored and cut into rings

Fry sausages in a large skillet until golden, about 15-20 minutes. Drain. Meanwhile, heat syrup and vinegar in a medium saucepan to a boil. Reduce heat and stir in apple rings, simmer uncovered over low heat until apples are tender, about 5 minutes. Remove apple rings, arrange on a platter with sausages and pour syrup mixture over top.

Serve immediately with pancakes or waffles. Serves 4-6.

MAPLE SYRUP GLAZED HAM

- 1 smoked ham, about 7 pounds
- 1 quart apple juice
- 1 cup maple syrup
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1 cup golden raisins

Heat the ham, apple juice and syrup in a large casserole or Dutch oven. Cover and simmer over medium low heat for 2 1/2 hours. Remove ham and trim outer skin from the ham. Measure cooking liquid from Dutch oven. Return one cup of the liquid to the Dutch oven. Reserve 3 cups of the liquid.

Whisk flour and dry mustard into the one cup of the liquid in the Dutch oven. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly until smooth.

Add raisins and 3 cups of reserved liquid to this mixture. Cook over medium low heat stirring constantly until thick and bubbly for about 10 minutes. Serve with sliced ham and sweet potatoes. Serves 8-10.

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