

# Hail from page D1

saw their large, shiny copper pots. Those experiences planted a culinary seed.

His father encouraged him. "Hey, why don't you become a chef?" he asked. "You can travel the world. People always have to eat and you will always have a job."

Haller cooked in Switzerland for nearly a decade, then moved to Montreal, and eventually to Phoenix, then New York City. There he cooked lobster thermidor for then Vice President Johnson in the early 1960s.

When the White House sought an executive chef in January 1966, the staff arranged an interview with Haller and Ladybird Johnson.

Soon the Johnsons hired Haller. "Mrs. Johnson was concerned about keeping the president happy, which I found out wasn't always so easy," Haller said.

While Haller may joke a little about the presidents he cooked for while telling stories to an audience, he maintains a deep respect and reverence for those men and their families.

Haller said Republican presidents threw smaller gatherings than, for the most part, required an easier dinner preparation. Each president since Herbert Hoover paid for their own groceries, but the U.S. State Department paid Haller's salary.

Haller said he was busiest with the Johnsons. "They loved people and always had guests," he said.

## POW party 'fantastic'

Richard M. Nixon showed the most interest in food, asking many questions about meals. Haller cooked for weddings for the two first families: Patricia Nixon and Linda Johnson. On each occasion, "the press wanted the recipe for the wedding cake,"

## 'Mrs. Johnson was concerned about keeping the president happy, which I found out wasn't always so easy.'

Henry Haller  
—former White House executive chef

Haller said. "And (the newspaper) said the recipe doesn't work."

Of course the cake was 9-foot tall for the Johnson wedding, and of similar size for the Nixons. "The Nixons wanted to have the wedding in the Rose Garden and it was raining that day," Haller said. "President Nixon said 'It has to stop raining' ... and it did."

Nixon wanted a steak dinner for only 1,300 people, many of whom were prisoners of war, among them John McCain, former Republican candidate for president and a U.S. senator from Arizona.

Haller peeled three cases of cherry tomatoes the night before, then glazed them with aspic and also created strawberry mousse. He awakened in the middle of the night, fraught with worry about the event, so he checked the refrigerators at 5 a.m. Everything went without a hitch for the generals from the Pentagon, prisoners of war and celebrities in attendance, including John Wayne and Bob Hope.

"It was a great experience ... when it was over," Haller remembered, calling it a "fantastic" evening. "President Nixon called and thanked me."

While dignitaries and guests often enjoyed the special events, there weren't always happy times. Haller remembers Nixon's departure from the White House.

"The staff at the White House gets attached with the first family," Haller said. "It was a sad occasion, the press wanted the recipe for the wedding cake,"

time was up."

He remembers seeing Nixon in his pajamas and bare feet the day he left. "He said, 'Chef, I've been all over the world, and you're the best I've had,'" Haller recalled.

## Ford 'relaxed'

President Gerald Ford was the most relaxed president. "He liked his job because he didn't owe anybody anything," Haller said. "He liked pork chops, mashed potatoes and red cabbage."

During the Ford administration and the bicentennial, the White House saw a constant flow of international leaders from Germany, England, Norway, Sweden, Holland, New Zealand, Austria and others.

"Every time I had to have a different dinner," Haller said. Actually the assistants to the heads of state were more difficult than the leaders themselves. "My experience with the heads of state was the higher up they are, the easier they were to please."

Haller remembers President Jimmy Carter's negotiations on the peace treaty between Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat, which was a dinner for 1,300 people with salmon mousse, sirloin and vegetables and chocolate mousse.

The Carters liked the deep Southern foods, such as mustard greens, collard greens, grits, fried okra and fried chicken. "The Carter family was very

wonderful. (The president) wanted them to live like the average family."

## A statuesque party

The 100-year celebration of the Statue of Liberty with the Reagan and the Mitterrandes from France was an incredible challenge as Haller had to be at two different sites for the dinners for 40 people.

Because space was limited on Governor's Island, Haller could take only one chef. He proposed to the Reagans that he serve cold food that he could transport on that hot July day, which they accepted.

Haller planned for cold borscht and crab mousse with lobster, and three sorbets. A Statue of Liberty was re-created — in chocolate. But there wasn't room for error in the neat presentation which Nancy Reagan loved and preferred, especially as Haller and the staff transported the food on Marine helicopters.

"The helicopter was like 24 washing machines, and right then I was thinking about Mrs. Reagan," Haller said. "Another chef said, 'You go look at the (food storage) locker, I'm not looking at it,'" Haller said. But the dinners were a success, then the chefs returned to Washington in the helicopters. Haller remembers New York harbor filled with aircraft carriers and ships.

"We felt like pretty big shots," Haller said.

Even though he worked for many different presidents and personalities, he doesn't express any preference. Ask him what political preference he has, and he won't disclose it. Instead, he'll respond, "Politics and cooking don't mix."

See recipes inside.

# Serve up kosher dishes

Recipes courtesy of Beverly Price, modified from Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood in Flint. See related column on Taste front.

## VEGETARIAN CHOPPED LIVER

1 (15-ounce) can green peas  
2 onions  
2 eggs, hard boiled or equivalent egg substitute  
1 cup walnuts, finely ground  
2 tablespoons mayonnaise  
Salt and pepper to taste

Drain peas. Sauté onions.

Mash peas, onions and eggs together. Add walnuts, salt and pepper and mix together well with mayonnaise. Chill and serve.

## VEGETARIAN KISHKA

2 carrots  
2 celery sticks  
1 box round whole wheat crackers

1/4 cup melted margarine (non-hydrogenated)  
1 onion, grated  
dash pepper

Grind all ingredients together. Mix and shape by hand in shape of kishka (roll).

Wrap in foil and bake at 350° F for 45 minutes. Open foil 20 minutes to brown. May be refrigerated or frozen before or after baking.

Visit Beverly Price at the Michigan International Women's Show May 4 - 7 in booth 539. Don't miss Living Better Sensibly-A Multidisciplinary Approach to Menopause on Friday, May 5, 8:30 p.m. at the Seminar Stage of the Women's Show. Call (248) 539-9424 for more information. The first caller to leave a message will win two tickets to the show.

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## CORRECTION NOTICE

In our April 2 Insert, we advertised the Snoop Doggy CD. Snoop Doggy Doggy at 115 Best as being available Tuesday, April 4.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, this CD will not be available on April 4, and there is no current estimate for when it may be available. We apologize for any confusion or inconvenience this may have caused.



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## Do Social Situations Make You Nervous?

Do you experience extreme anxiety?

- During public speaking
- While eating or writing in front of others
- While speaking on the phone in front of others
- Any situation where you are the focus of a group of people



The Institute for Health Studies is now offering a research study of an investigational medication that may improve the symptoms of social phobia. Participation is free to those who qualify and includes a comprehensive physical exam and a psychiatric evaluation. Problems cannot be accepted for this research study.

**INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH STUDIES**  
Robert J. Bielicki, MD, Medical Director  
(517) 349-5505 / (800) 682-6663

## How Anxious Are You?

Answer the following questions based on the last 2 weeks or more.

- |                          |                          |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| YES                      | NO                       |                          | 1. I feel keyed up, on edge or restless                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. I feel stressed most of the time                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. I have trouble sleeping (either too much or too little) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. I have trouble concentrating, or my mind goes "blank"   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. I feel irritable; I can't relax                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. I notice my heart beating rapidly                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. I feel worried, anxious and fearful                     |

If you answered "yes" to 3 or more statements, you may be suffering from an anxiety disorder, a serious condition affecting millions of Americans. The Institute for Health Studies is currently looking for individuals experiencing the above symptoms to participate in a research study of investigational medication for anxiety. If you are selected, all research related care and study medication are provided at no cost. Get answers and information about anxiety.

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